

PLUCK AND LUCK

STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

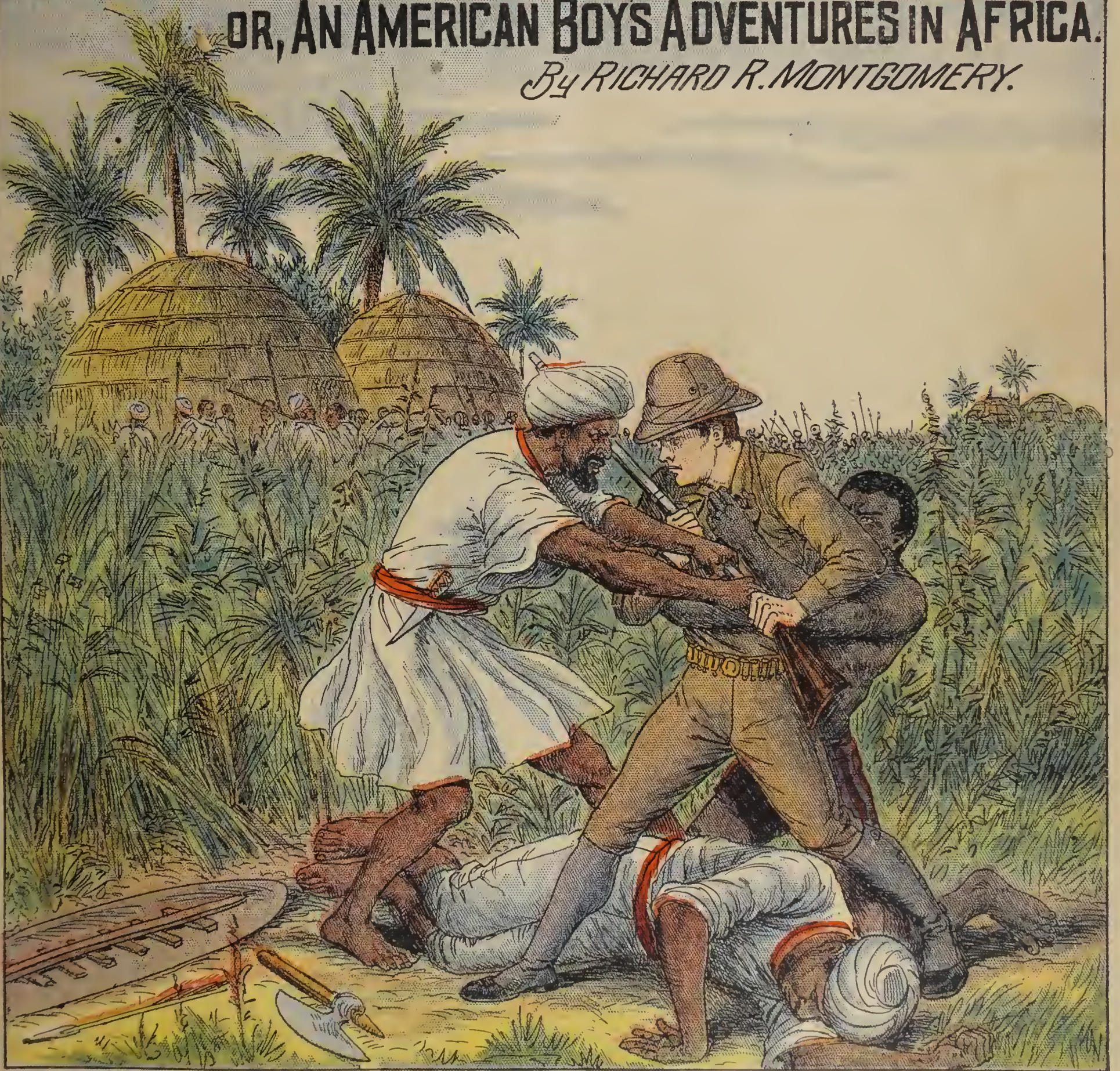
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LOST AMONG THE SLAVE HUNTERS; OR, AN AMERICAN BOY'S ADVENTURES IN AFRICA. *By RICHARD R. MONTGOMERY.*



Three Arabs stumbled upon his hiding place. Frank leaped to his feet and discharged his rifle. The foremost Arab fell; another clutched Frank's weapon by the barrel and strove to wrest it from him, while the other sought to drag him down.

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Lost Among the Slave Hunters

OR,

An American Boy's Adventures in Africa

By **Richard R. Montgomery**

CHAPTER I.

FRANK STANHOPE'S PROMISE.

"There goes one of the brightest boys in the school," remarked Professor Dean, of one of the leading New York city commercial colleges, as a manly-looking lad of about eighteen went by the office window.

Frank Stanhope, the subject of this commendatory remark, certainly deserved it, for he was naturally apt, possessed of excellent studious habits, and very ambitious.

Knowing as he did that he had his own way to make in the world, he comprehended the necessity for fitting himself for a useful business career.

But there were times when Frank wished that his inclinations might be allowed gratification for a time at least.

The boy was passionately fond of travel, and he had inherited a love of adventure from his deceased father which nothing could eradicate from his nature.

Left an orphan at an early age, Frank had become the ward of Daniel Morton, a well-to-do old gentleman, who had been the life-long friend of the lad's father.

Frank was on his way homeward to the residence of his guardian when he passed the window of the college office, and as he entered the house a servant met him in the hall and said quietly:

"Master Frank, sure Mr. Morton is in the library beyant, and he said he wanted to see you as soon as you came from school."

"All right, Larry, I'll go to the library at once."

"And whist a bit, sure, an' it's bad news the masther has for you, I'm thinkin', me gossoon."

"Why so? What makes you think there is bad news for me, Larry?"

"It's tellin' av ye I'll be afther doin'. Sure an' the masther just received a telegram, an' whin he had read it, I knew be the face av him he had bad news. Thin it was he said he wanted to see you as soon as you came in."

"A telegram! Ah, I suspect it is something about Uncle Mathew, who is seriously ill at his home in Albany."

"That's it, I'm afraid, Frank," replied Larry O'Lynn.

The kind-hearted Irishman was an old servant of Frank's deceased father, and he was devoted to the boy, and he meant

to serve him while he lived as faithfully as he had served his sire.

Frank passed on into the library, and his guardian, who he found seated at his desk with a telegram before him, greeted him cordially.

Daniel Morton was a retired merchant, and childless. Frank had crept into the vacant place in his heart, and the lad's welfare was a matter of serious concern to the old gentleman.

"You wished to see me, uncle?" said Frank, who had been taught to call his guardian thus, although no relationship existed between them, other than the ties of affection.

"Yes. I've just received the news that your Uncle Mathew is dying. He was a good friend of mine in other days, before he and your father became estranged, through an unfortunate business misunderstanding, and the news of his serious condition was quite a shock to me. I thought he was improving."

"I am very sorry to hear of Uncle Mathew's fatal illness, though he seems almost like a stranger to me."

"Well, my boy, your dying uncle has expressed an urgent desire to see you. The telegram requests us to hasten to his bedside. The dispatch was sent by Jason Broderick, your cousin, who, it seems, has been with Mathew for some time."

"We will take the next train for Albany, uncle. But, by the way, it was Jason Broderick who went out to Africa with father's youngest brother, Luther Stanhope, the missionary, was it not? You know the Broderick branch of our family are strangers to me almost."

"Yes. Jason Broderick went with your uncle, the Reverend Luther Stanhope, to Africa, where the former established a mission far in the interior, and devoted his life to the cause of Christianity in the dark continent. Luther is a noble fellow, self-sacrificing, earnest in his work, and he is yet at his mission in the Central African country, I believe."

"But Jason Broderick returned from Africa after a few years' absence, and I've understood he came back considerably enriched."

"That is true. Jason left your uncle, the missionary, soon after the latter established his mission in the interior, and joined a party of Arab traders, with whom he went northward. From your uncle Luther's letters I know that he never saw Jason Broderick after they parted at the mission."

"I suppose Jason made his money with the Arab traders?"

"So he said when he came home. He claimed to have en-

aged extensively in the ivory trade with the northern tribes. But I've heard some dark hints about his doings in Africa."

"What have you heard, uncle?"

"Well, you know Jason is not as steady in his habits as he might be, and when in his cups he has evinced a knowledge of African slave hunting and the traffic in human chattels that might awaken a startling suspicion."

"Why, uncle?"

"But after all perhaps I wrong Jason. I never liked him. Some way he always inspired me with distrust, although he has always tried to be friendly."

"And he is with Uncle Mathew now?"

"Yes. As I said. And he has for several weeks devoted himself to the care of the invalid. Day and night he has been at his bedside, scarcely knowing sleep. No one could be more constant in his attention. But there will come into my mind a doubt as to the disinterestedness of his motive."

"Then you half think——"

"Well, you know, Frank, your Uncle Mathew is a bachelor, and a millionaire. He must leave his money to someone."

"I see. But I think Uncle Luther, the missionary, was always Uncle Mat's favorite brother. I suppose he will inherit the million."

"Unless undue influence is brought to bear on the dying man, no doubt the bulk of the fortune will go to Luther. And I must tell you. The news which we have obtained recently, through the newspapers, of the trouble the British expedition to suppress the slave trade in Africa has met with in the neighborhood of the mission, from which your Uncle Luther was last heard from has awakened grave fears for his safety in my mind."

"I have thought of that. Many heroic spirits who have gone to carry the tidings of Christianity to the benighted African tribes have been murdered by the savages. But oh, I trust uncle may not have been added to the list of martyrs."

"But for three months we have not heard a word from Luther, and we understand him to be completely cut off from the seaboard, with hundreds of warlike natives between him and civilization. The Arabs who are particularly interested in the slave traffic, have cunningly incited the warlike savages against the whites, that the attempt to put an end to their terrible business may fail."

"Oh, how I would like to go to Uncle Luther's rescue—to march through the African wilds at the head of a band of brave men and bring salvation to the imperiled one who may be calling out in vain for assistance!" cried Frank, enthusiastically.

He had always been his Uncle Luther's favorite, and it seemed to the lad that he could see before him then the pale, intellectual face of the missionary lighted up by a pair of deep, dark eyes, shining with the light of a noble purpose as he said good-by to him when he went to carry the news of salvation to the land of darkness.

"You are a chip of the old block, Frank. Your father was always ready for adventure, and ready to rush headlong into danger to assist a friend," said Mr. Morton, smiling, but admiring the spirit which prompted the boy.

Just then the clock on the mantel chimed the hour in musical notes, and warned them that they must not delay their preparations if they would catch the next train for Albany.

So the conversation was discontinued then, to be resumed again when they found themselves inmates of a railway coach and being whirled rapidly along on their journey.

"If I was a young man I believe I should feel like setting out to solve the mystery of Luther Stanhope's fate myself. But I'm too old. I should only leave my bones in the African jungle, I fear," said Mr. Morton.

"True, your age would be against you, uncle, but you are

hale and hearty for all that. Of course, however, you could not think of undertaking an African journey."

"No; but it almost seems as though some friend of Luther's should make an effort in his behalf. Yet he may not be in actual danger despite all our fears."

There was further talk, which need not be recorded, and in due time the train reached Albany.

Without delay Mr. Morton and Frank secured a cab, and were conveyed to the residence of Mathew Stanhope.

But they were almost too late.

The physician met them at the door and informed them that the dying man had but a few moments of his earthly span yet left.

Hastily they were conducted to the presence of Mathew Stanhope, and at the bedside of the dying man Frank came face to face with a tall, dark, heavily-bearded man of middle age.

Mr. Morton introduced him to the lad.

The man was Jason Broderick.

Though as yet Frank suspected it not, he had met one in the returned African adventurer who was destined to, in the future, exert a strange influence upon his destiny.

The dying man recognized Frank and his guardian, and signaled them to draw near. Then, when they stood with Jason Broderick bending above him and ready to catch his faintest words, he said:

"It is my last dying wish that Jason Broderick and Frank should go to Africa and find out whether Brother Luther be living or dead, and if living communicate to him the news of my death and the contents of my will."

Having thus spoken with great effort and long pauses between the words, Mathew Stanhope was seized with a severe fit of coughing.

But in a moment or so he rallied and spoke again.

"Promise me, Frank, and you, Jason, that you will carry out my last dying wish," he said.

The eyes of the speaker sought the faces of Frank and Jason Broderick in a glance of entreaty which the lad could not resist, and he said earnestly:

"I promise, uncle, I promise."

And Jason Broderick added:

"And I, too, pledge my word to carry out your request."

Scarcely five minutes later, and, without speaking further, Mathew Stanhope passed away peacefully, and seemingly much gratified by the promise Frank and Jason Broderick had made him.

We may pass over ensuing events until the day succeeding the funeral of Mathew Stanhope.

Then Frank, Jason Broderick, Mr. Morton and several distant relatives of the deceased, assembled to listen to the reading of the will which had been made some time previously by Mathew Stanhope and intrusted to his lawyer.

Jason Broderick sat in a shadowy corner of the apartment, and his face could not be distinctly seen. But for all that it looked pale and anxious.

As the lawyer opened the will and began to read a nervous tremor shook the frame of the African adventurer from head to foot. The reading went on.

Deprived of its legal forms and verbiage the will amounted to this:

To his brother Luther, the African missionary, Mathew Stanhope left all his vast fortune, save a bequest of five thousand dollars to Jason Broderick in gratitude for his kindness, and a like sum to Frank.

The sum of ten thousand dollars was also set apart as a fund to be used to find Luther Stanhope if necessary. More could be drawn if required.

When the bequests had been read, Jason Broderick stood

and passed out of the room. His hands were clinched and his dark face wore an evil look. Striding away, his troubled thoughts were formulated into words.

"And so all my scheme to get the fortune by ingratiating myself into the old fool's good graces and gaining his gratitude has failed. What is a paltry five thousand dollars! Bah! I could strangle the miserable old dolt if I had my fingers on his throat. He kept telling me how gratified he was for all I was doing. He led me to think the million would be mine. And now all goes to that whining preacher. The man who has buried himself in the African jungles and who has no use for the money. But I am going to find the heir. Ah ha! All is not lost. In the event of the missionary's death the boy will inherit the million. But after him I am the next heir. And the boy goes with me to Africa."

The look that accompanied the last words gave them a terrible meaning.

CHAPTER II.

JASON BRODERICK BEGINS HIS DESPERATE PLOT.

Frank's guardian did not like the idea of his ward going to Africa in company with Jason Broderick.

His opinion of the man selected by Mathew Stanhope to accompany Frank to "the dark continent" in search of the lost heir to a million caused him many and grave apprehensions.

But Jason Broderick set himself about the task of rehabilitating himself in the eyes of Mr. Morton, and pending the time set for his departure for Africa, so well did he enact his part, that he became the invited guest of Frank's guardian.

No man knew better how to conduct himself to win approval and make himself agreeable than Jason Broderick, and very soon after he became Mr. Morton's guest that gentleman began to think he had wronged Frank's cousin by the doubts and suspicions which he had entertained regarding his character.

Jason Broderick had commenced a shrewd and desperate game for a million, and he was one who would shrink from nothing to consummate his own mercenary ends.

He was an actor of no mean ability, and he completely won Frank. The lad never tired of listening to his entertaining and thrilling stories of African adventure, and very soon Jason Broderick made himself a hero in Frank's estimation, and he quite forgot that he had ever entertained an adverse opinion of him.

While Jason Broderick succeeded in making himself an almost universal favorite with every one under Mr. Morton's roof, there was one there who would not accept the crafty schemer for what he seemed.

Larry O'Lynn distrusted and disliked Jason Broderick from the first, and when he learned he was to be Frank's comrade in Africa, the true-hearted Irishman was in consternation and alarm.

"Sure, Masther Morton, ye will not be afther lettin' the gossoon Frank go away to the heathen land of the nagurs alone wid that black-muzzled mon? Faith, an' there is a hidden divil in his eyes, an' he manes mischief, as sure as you live!" Larry said privately to Mr. Morton.

"Nonsense! You have taken a dislike to Mr. Broderick without cause, Larry. Of course, Frank must keep his promise to the dead and go with his cousin to Africa."

"Then will ye let me go along wid him? Don't refuse me. If any harm should come to the boy, old Larry could never forgive himself. When he was a wee little baby his father put him in my hands and said, says he, 'Larry, me lad, be a

friend to the little wan.' 'I will,' says I, and by the harp of Tara, I mane to kape me word."

"You're an honest fellow, Larry, and I cannot find it in my heart to refuse your request. After all, it may be best that you should go with Frank. With such a devoted friend as you are with him, I shall feel more secure regarding his safety."

"Thank you, Master Morton. Sure, an' it's lighter ye have made me heart by grantin' me request to go wid Frank. Be the shamrock so green, now let Mr. Jason Broderick be careful. I'll watch him, and if he strikes at Master Frank he'll have to first reach old Larry."

Just at that moment a slight rustling was heard among the curtains that crossed the alcove in which the speakers were.

"Whish, a bit!" said Larry in a whisper, and with a significant gesture he tip-toed across the room and suddenly drew the curtains aside.

There was no one there. But the imprint of soiled feet upon the carpet told the quick-eyed and keen-witted Irishman that an eavesdropper had been there.

But when Larry called his attention to the same, Mr. Morton was loath to believe that there was anyone in his house dishonorable enough to play the part of a spy.

"You may be mistaken, Larry; I think you are inclined to magnify trifles," said he.

But Larry knew he was right, and so reaffirmed, and then the conversation ended as Frank and Jason Broderick entered.

"I've just promised Larry he should go with you to Africa, Frank, as a sort of bodyguard and general factotum," said Mr. Morton.

"Bravo! The very thing I was about to suggest," Frank replied in pleased approval.

"Yes. Certainly. A valuable comrade Larry will make, I am sure," assented Broderick.

But his expression, which passed unnoticed by all save Larry, belied his words.

At heart the arch schemer was anything but pleased. He had played the part of an eavesdropper behind the curtain, and only retreated barely in time to escape discovery by Larry.

Jason Broderick had heard every word of the conversation between Larry and his master, which took place before he and Frank, whom he had met in the hall, entered.

Frank's secret foe was now fully informed regarding Larry O'Lynn's doubts and suspicions, and he was enraged and chagrined.

He had congratulated himself that no one had penetrated the mask of deceit in which he had hidden his true nature. But the Irishman had found him out.

"The infernal Irishman is keener than all the rest. I fear the fellow, and by Heavens, he shall not go to Africa with Frank Stanhope. The fellow would be a marplot. He might balk all my scheme. No, no, Mr. Larry. Cunning as you are, you will find that Jason Broderick is much more than a match for you before you are much older."

Thus had Broderick reflected while listening behind the curtain.

Frank and Broderick had been out making some final purchases and preparations for their voyage to Africa, and they were to sail the following day on an English steamer.

The lad and his companion had much to say about their last purchases and preparations. Larry O'Lynn left them in conversation with Mr. Morton, and as he went out he caught the gleam of a baleful, threatening glance, which Jason Broderick covertly shot at him from underneath his bushy eyebrows.

Larry felt that Broderick was his own secret enemy as well as Frank's, and he was confident that the man he so much distrusted had overheard all he had said about him.

"Be me soul he's a dangerous fellow, and I'll kape me eyes

open when he's about. Sure an' I wouldn't like to meet him in a dark place alone," thought Larry.

That evening Frank was invited to attend a sort of farewell reception given by his school friends, with whom he was a universal favorite.

Frank left the house at eight, and assured his guardian and Jason Broderick that he should probably be detained at the reception until a late hour.

When Frank was gone Broderick busied himself about the room which had been his since he became Mr. Morton's guest.

In the grate, among other things, he burned a number of letters. But one of them slipped behind the fire-board, and was uninjured by the flames.

It was a trivial incident, and yet great would have been Jason Broderick's alarm had he known that letter had not been destroyed.

He watched the fire in the grate until the papers he had heaped upon it were all consumed, and then he muttered:

"Now all that might betray the secrets of my past is destroyed—Captain Mendoza's letters, El Hassen's queer messages, and all."

Jason Broderick remained alone in his room for a long time mapping out, mentally, a strange and terrible plot against Frank Stanhope and the African missionary.

"There are only two lives between me and the million. I will not hesitate. And now to make sure the meddling Irishman, Larry O'Lynn, does not accompany Frank Stanhope to Africa," soliloquized Broderick, finally.

It chanced that he knew Larry had obtained permission to sit up with a sick friend until midnight, and that the faithful fellow had promised to return home at that hour.

After making certain preparations, Jason Broderick stealthily left the house unseen by anyone, and stationed himself at the entrance of a dark alley on a retired street, which he believed Larry O'Lynn would traverse on his homeward way.

In one hand Broderick grasped what looked like a short piece of thick rope, but which was really a deadly sand-bag.

The face of the lurking man who was lying in wait for Larry O'Lynn was concealed by a wide-brimmed hat, drawn down so as to almost meet the high, upturned collar of his coat.

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The clock in a steeple not far away chimed the hour of midnight shortly after Jason Broderick took up his position at the entrance of the alley.

But a few moments later Broderick discerned under the light of a street lamp the approaching figure of the man upon whom he meditated making a cowardly assault.

"He is coming! One blow on the head will fix him for a week in bed, at least. I must not fail now. The first blow must do the work. He is a strong fellow, and I do not care to risk a struggle," muttered Broderick.

A moment or so subsequently Larry O'Lynn, all unconscious of his peril, was passing the alley, humming a cheerful Irish ditty in a rich, musical voice.

Then Broderick glided out as silently as a shadow behind his victim, and raised his deadly silent weapon for a blow. It must have been that Larry at that instant caught a glimpse of his shadow, for he turned as the blow of the sandbag fell.

Instead of the blow striking Larry on the back of the head he received it on the shoulder, and then he clutched both of his assailant's arms, and they struggled across the pavement into the street.

Both heard the sound of approaching footsteps, and Larry shouted:

"Police! Help! Police!"

Then Broderick, who faced the approaching person, while Larry's back was turned toward him, saw that it was Frank Stanhope who was coming.

"He will discover me, and if so all my plot is ruined. It must not—shall not be!" thought Broderick, and Frank, in answer to Larry's call, came rushing up.

Desperation gave Broderick surprising strength, and he tore himself from the Irishman's grasp and dealt him a stunning blow with the sand-bag. Poor Larry fell senseless, and the succeeding instant Frank Stanhope seized his assailant.

The danger of discovery rendered Broderick desperate, and exerting all his strength he hurled Frank away, and then bounded down the gloomy alley. Frank did not pursue him, and he had not seen Broderick's face.

Regaining his feet he hastened to the side of Larry, whom he already recognized. Solicitude for the welfare of his humble friend took precedence, and after seeing that Larry was badly hurt he ran to the next street and secured a cab, in which the injured man was conveyed home.

Meantime Jason Broderick had safely regained his room unseen by anyone in the house, and he congratulated himself that Larry was ignorant of the identity of his assailant. But not so; the Irishman had caught a glimpse of Broderick's face during their brief struggle.

Jason Broderick had accomplished his purpose, however. The physician, who was quickly called, stated that Larry had received a serious injury, and that he would have to keep his bed for many days. The poor fellow did not regain consciousness until next day, and then he was in delirium.

And so Frank sailed for Africa without Larry, and with his secret, unsuspected foe for his trusted comrade.

Terrible and thrilling adventures were before the boy, and perhaps Jason Broderick's dark plot would succeed.

CHAPTER III.

THE ARAB SLAVE-HUNTERS.

Fortunately Frank and Jason Broderick had a safe and pleasant voyage to Africa, and in less than the time usually consumed by the journey across the sea, they landed at Cape Town.

Without delay, and accompanied by a force of a dozen natives, the young American and his comrade started northward. Jason Broderick knew the location of Luther Stanhope's mission, and despite the fact that a long journey through a country swarming with hostile natives lay before him, he evinced no hesitation.

Frank admired his cousin's pluck, and considered him a really brave man. But he was anxious for the issue of the expedition.

Everything interested Frank, for all he saw was new and novel. He was a student of history, and he knew that, incredible as it seemed, all there was of civilization in the world was found at one time in Africa.

Frank and his companion's outfit was such as would enable them to march rapidly. They did not encumber themselves with ox-wagons, and all they took with them was carried in packs on the backs of their natives.

Experience had taught Jason Broderick what would be needed, and besides a supply of firearms, ammunition, and many other articles, he had not neglected to take along a quantity of colored glass beads and a variety of showy trinkets which are highly prized by the blacks of the interior.

Marching hurriedly through the diamond country and the land of the Boers and the Kaffirs, whom they have subju-

gated, Frank and his party soon found themselves in the great unknown land of Central Africa.

Then the real dangers of the journey were at hand. The country was full of wild animals of the fiercest varieties, and savage men lurked in the jungles.

Sometimes the way lay through grassy savannahs and amid beautiful groves and then all went well. But traveling through the jungles was necessarily slow work.

The prodigally luxuriant vegetation rendered the task no easy one. Vines interlaced the shrubbery and were covered with sharp thorns that drew blood. Ravenous insects, vampire leeches and huge green flies dwelt among the rank vegetation, and were a constant source of annoyance.

The party manfully met every difficulty and not without several encounters with the fierce black savages and thrilling adventures, finally arrived in the neighborhood of the village in which Luther Stanhope had established his mission.

They were now upon the border of a large tract of country in the neighborhood of the equatorial line. This was the land of the Niams, or Niam-Niams, as they are sometimes called.

This remarkable race of negroes are cannibals, as all travelers agree, and indeed the name Niam-Niam signifies man-eater. They are fierce, warlike, and, in fact, the most terrible monsters of the dark continent.

Jason Broderick warned Frank and the natives of his band that they would be in constant peril of their lives while marching through the Niams' country.

The warning was verified. The very first day of their further advance a band of Niam-Niam warriors suddenly appeared from a jungle and rushed upon the Americans' little band with terrible yells. But the bullets of the whites struck consternation to the hearts of the black warriors, and they fled in superstitious terror. We need not dwell upon the several skirmishes with the natives that ensued. Suffice it to say the entire journey across the land of the Niam-Niams was a running fight, and that at last the ferocious man-eaters were left behind.

Five days later the Americans arrived at the village where Jason Broderick had left Luther Stanhope, the missionary, years before.

The village consisted of numerous huts, built of rushes and mud, which had been used as mortar. In the center of the village was an open space or public square, and in the middle of the square was a post upon which hung several huge drums.

No sooner did the natives, who were a mild, peaceful tribe, many of whom had been Christianized to some extent by the labors of Luther Stanhope, the missionary, discover the approach of Frank and his comrades than the great drums in the public square were beaten, creating a din that was absolutely deafening, and calling forth all the inhabitants of the huts.

A strange, grotesque crowd of nearly naked Africans came flocking to the public square, but though Frank and Jason Broderick scanned the crowd with keen and searching glances, they could not discover a white man among them.

The whites continued to advance, with Jason Broderick in the lead and Frank at his side. The African adventurer knew something of the native language, and he made signs of friendship, and called out that he was the friend of the white missionary.

Then, as he drew nearer, he was recognized by the old chief of the tribe, who had been there when he and Luther Stanhope came among the natives first, years previously.

After that everything went well. Luther Stanhope had won the respect and friendship of the tribe, and for his sake Broderick and his comrades were welcomed.

The American's first inquiry was for Luther Stanhope, and then they learned startling news.

"The good white priest is dead," replied the old native chief solemnly.

It was so. The particulars of Luther Stanhope's demise were soon made known. He had fallen a victim to the dreaded African fever. The old chief conducted the Americans to a lonely grave under a great tree, where reposed the remains of one more martyr who had sacrificed his life in the cause of Christianity.

Frank was deeply moved, and tears of sorrow fell upon the green mound which marked the last resting-place of his beloved uncle.

And while the boy knelt beside the grave, Jason Broderick turned away, and his swarthy face took on an expression that was absolutely fiendish in its guilty exultation.

"Now there is only one life between me and the million. This changes my plot somewhat. Now I have only to rid myself of Frank Stanhope forever, and then all—all is mine," thought Broderick.

Scarcely an hour later there was another arrival at the missionary's village. A solitary Arab came in, and, in explanation of his presence, stated that he belonged to a caravan of ivory traders, and that he had become separated from his fellows three days before, and lost his way.

At this time the terrible curse of Africa, the slave trade, was at its height, and at the full zenith of its prosperity. As yet the efforts of the British government to abolish it had produced little effect beyond the confines of the territory along the Nile, and among the tribes who were subjected to the Egyptian government.

The Arabs were the slave-hunters of Africa, and they were dreaded by the natives everywhere. It might therefore have fared badly with the solitary man of the slave-hunting race had not Jason Broderick greeted him warmly and vouched for him as a friend.

Frank was not a little surprised at this, for the Arab was one of the most evil-looking men he had ever beheld, and the boy was satisfied that his story of being lost was all a falsehood.

The young American was impressed with the suspicion that the Arab had visited the native village for an evil purpose.

Frank had wandered away into the woods not far from the village, gun in hand, some time later, and failing to find any game he was returning, when all at once he heard voices, and a moment subsequently he saw Jason Broderick and the Arab who claimed to have been lost from his party.

The two men were standing in an open glade conversing earnestly. Frank heard what they said distinctly, and the first words that reached him sent a thrill through his nerves, and startled him beyond measure.

"Yes," said the Arab. "You can depend upon your old friend, El Hassen. The white boy, whom you call Frank Stanhope, shall never trouble you again. At a signal from me my band of slave-hunters, two hundred strong, will rush out of the thickets to the southward and capture the village. I came first merely to spy out the land, and I did not expect to meet my old comrade, Jason Broderick."

"Nothing could have pleased me better. Carry the white boy away with the other slaves you will capture, and sell him far away. He must end his days in slavery."

"Very good. That suits me, my comrade," responded the Arab slave-hunter.

"The boy is bronzed by exposure to the hot African sun almost to the color of some of the native tribes. Strip him of the light English tourist costume which he now wears, and pass him off for an African."

"It shall be done. I've an order for a cargo of slaves from our old friend, Captain Mendoza, of the slave-ship Vulture now."

Some more but unimportant remarks followed, and then the two men separated. While the Arab slave-hunter crept away to rejoin his men, Jason Broderick returned to the village.

For a moment Frank was almost paralyzed by the terrible discovery which he had made. All at once he comprehended Broderick's awful treachery, and the motive that prompted it. His blood ran cold in his veins as he thought of the horrible fate to which his unnatural kinsman had condemned him.

But Frank felt that he must act at once. He resolved to warn the natives and help them beat off the slave-hunters.

He crept toward the village under cover of the tall grass, and gained it ahead of Jason Broderick.

But a few moments later he had given the alarm. But it came too late. Frank had but just acquainted the natives with the news of the slave-hunters' proximity in force, when the loud discharge of guns was heard, and the yells of the Arabs who had surrounded the village.

The natives were thrown into a panic of terror, and all was confusion in the village. The Arabs charged forward, carrying all before them. The warriors who resisted were mercilessly shot down. The women and all who were easily overpowered were secured, their hands bound behind their backs, and their necks invested with heavy forked sticks, which the slave-dealers had previously cut and brought with them on the backs of their donkeys. In addition to these wooden yokes the men were tied together by long twisted cords made of tough bush-creepers. The little children alone were left free to follow their mothers into captivity.

Seeing that a repulse of the slave-dealers was hopeless, Frank concealed himself in the tall grass at the edge of the village, and was waiting for an opportunity to creep away unseen, when three Arabs stumbled upon his hiding-place.

Frank leaped to his feet and discharged his rifle.

The foremost Arab fell; another clutched Frank's weapon by the barrel, and strove to wrest it from him, while the other sought to drag him down.

For a moment Frank battled with all the desperation which the terrible situation inspired.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SHEIK'S DAUGHTER.

While Frank Stanhope struggled with the Arabs who had first discovered him, several other members of the slave-hunters' band rushed up, and the brave young American was finally disarmed and overpowered.

Frank was hurled upon the ground and one of the enraged Arabs raised his spear to drive it into the lad's breast.

The boy saw the light of murder in the flashing eyes of the swarthy wretch who stood over him, and saw the spear descending.

It was a terrible moment, and the lad thought that his hour of doom had surely come.

But it did not fall. El Hassen, the sheik or chief of the band, rushed forward, having at that moment discovered the peril of the white lad he meant to enslave.

"Hold, Baba!" shouted El Hassen, in Arabic. "Hold, I say! Strike not the white boy! Dead he is valueless, but alive he will bring us many gold pieces in the slave mart."

As he thus commanded the sheik grasped the descending spear.

Just in time had the sheik interposed. The spear was turned aside. But so great was the impetus of the blow the Arab had aimed at Frank, that the sharp point of the weapon grazed his body and was deeply buried in the sand at his side.

A thrill of unutterable relief went through Frank's nerves, as he knew he was saved.

Life was very dear to him, with whom it was yet the early spring-time of existence. He wanted to live. But the fate in store for him seemed almost worse than death.

But while there was life Frank felt there was hope, and he resolved that he would not entirely despair.

The thought that some opportunity might yet present itself to enable him to escape sustained him, even at the moment of his capture.

Frank was led forward toward a line of the poor, captured blacks, who stood yoked together in single file, as we have described.

And there the young American was confronted by the inhuman conspirator who had plotted to betray him to an awful fate.

Jason Broderick had discarded the mask of hypocrisy and deceit entirely now, and he stood regarding the strange, pitiful scene of desolation, misery and human enslavement with an exultant smile upon his evil face.

It seemed to Frank now surprising that he had been so terribly deceived in this man—that he had not read his character aright.

But indignation dominated every other thought in the lad's mind just then, and as Broderick turned his mocking evil face upon him Frank exclaimed:

"Villain! scoundrel! This is your work! You have sold me into slavery! I know all your plot now. You will return to America, report the death of my Uncle Luther, and also falsely prove that I have perished. But there is always something unforeseen in villains' plots, and Heaven may yet decree to foil you."

"Ha! ha! You have hit the truth regarding my plans precisely. Only, my dear cousin, you should have added that having proven that you and your Uncle Luther have shuffled off, I shall secure the defunct Mathew's million, as next heir."

As Jason Broderick uttered this taunting remark there was a commotion among the captives, and all at once a herculean black, who was one of the natives who had accompanied Frank's party from the south, sprang away.

The African had attached himself to Frank during the journey, and the lad had found him an intelligent and brave fellow. His name was Wamba.

The black giant was now bent upon making a desperate effort to escape.

One of the Arabs at Frank's side leveled his carbine at the escaping negro, and the succeeding moment he would have shot the poor fellow down in his tracks, but suddenly Frank jerked away from the men who held him, and struck up the slave-hunter's weapon.

The bullet therefore fled wide of its mark, for just as Frank struck the weapon the Arab pressed the trigger.

Wamba turned his head in time to see Frank's brave deed, and, as the Arab's bullet whistled by over his head, he knew that he owed his life to Frank.

The African giant was fleet of foot.

He knew that if he could gain the adjacent woods his chances of escape would be good, and he put forth all his speed.

The Arabs sent a volley of bullets after him, and several started in pursuit, but Wamba was not hit, and he distanced the Arabs and gained the cover.

El Hassen, the sheik, was enraged at the escape of the herculean black, for whom he had thought to obtain an excellent price in the slave market.

With one blow the Arab sheik struck Frank down at his feet, as he, too, was in the act of leaping away, and then, by

El Hassen's orders, the young American was bound hand and foot.

"You see you have a young tiger to deal with in my beloved cousin, El Hassen," sneered Jason Broderick.

"But I'll draw his claws. Strap the white boy up to yonder tree, and give him the lash. Lay on well, my men. Let him learn at once that he is now a slave," said the irate sheik.

Frank turned pale.

The horror of it all made him faint for a moment.

The Arabs seized him and dragged him toward a tree near by.

Vainly he struggled on account of his fetters and the overpowering odds against him, and he was bound to the tree with his arms drawn to their full length above his head, and his toes just touching the ground.

Rudely the brutal Arabs tore his garments from his back until it was bare.

Frank felt that it would be useless to ask for mercy, and he set his teeth with determined force, fully resolved that the terrible ordeal should not draw one single cry of pain from his lips.

The Arabs seized their donkey whips, two stout fellows were selected by El Hassen and they were about to inflict upon Frank the dreadful beating, such as they frequently gave refractory slaves, when all at once a surprising incident occurred.

A girlish form flitted between Frank and the swarthy fellows who meant to carry out the Arab sheik's cruel edict.

Frank caught but a transient glimpse of her and then she was behind him and between him and the Arabs.

But in that glimpse the American boy saw that the girl was a beautiful creature, and as fair as himself. He knew she was a white girl—a European—albeit dressed in Arab costume.

Her shapely arms were bare to the shoulders, but loaded with bracelets and gleaming under the sunlight. Her feet and ankles were also naked, save for heavy gold bangles, and her sole garment was a narrow shirt of blue silk coming to midleg, and girt with a Persian shawl. Her hair was braided with long plaits, and strung with gold coins into a most bewitching head-dress, and altogether she was a most lovely being.

"Stop!" cried the girl as she came between the Arab whippers and Frank Stanhope. "You shall not whip the white captive. I am the sheik's daughter, and I so command. My father will not deny me this boon."

"Zara, you should not have come here. I commanded you to remain at the camp. The white slave has rebelled. He must be punished," said El Hassen, sternly.

"The sheik never forgets a promise—to me, at least?"

"No, Zara. But what mean you?"

"Did you not say that I should have my choice of all the slaves you captured on this foray?"

"Tis true, Zara, that I made that promise."

"Then release the white slave."

"What mean you, child?"

"That I choose him for my property, as you promised I could."

"Furies! El Hassen, you are not to be controlled by the whim of a girl. She would let the boy escape!" cried Jason Broderick, striding forward.

"Go on with the punishment, men. Strike! Strike! I say!" the villain added.

One of the Arabs raised his whip.

But like a flash Zara seized the fellow's arm.

Broderick snatched the whip from the hand of the other Arab and was advancing upon Frank.

Then all at once an Arab dagger, which she had concealed upon her person, flashed in the hand of the brave young girl.

"Back! Back on your life!" she cried, and the gleaming steel flew back and forth before Jason Broderick's face as the girl menaced him with the weapon.

Just then El Hassen's hand fell heavily upon Broderick's shoulder and the Arab said sternly:

"I command here. Desist. I'll keep my promise to my daughter."

CHAPTER V.

WAMBA'S LUCKY SHOT.

Jason Broderick was enraged.

"This is not according to our compact," he said, wheeling upon El Hassen. "You promised to sell the white boy into slavery far away."

"A word with you on that point, my comrade," replied El Hassen, and he drew Broderick aside and whispered to him for a moment.

Whatever it was the sheik said, it seemed to satisfy the villain. He did not offer further protest then against the turn affairs were taking.

"Thank you, my father," said Zara as El Hassen turned to her.

The villainous old Arab slave-hunter smiled. If there was one tender spot in his merciless heart, it was occupied by the fair young girl who called him father.

"The white slave is yours—yours to keep in slavery. But I shall take good care you do not set him free, Zara," said El Hassen.

"You need not fear for that. Come, Baba, cut the white youth's bonds," replied Zara, addressing the last words to one of the Arab whippers.

Frank was unbound from the tree.

He meant to thank the maiden, but when he looked about for her, after he was released from the tree, she was gone.

"Come, men. Get the slave convoy under way, and we will set out for the camp at once," ordered El Hassen.

His order was obeyed. The captured negroes were hurried away from their desolated homes, and with cruel blows the Arabs urged them on.

Frank was marched along with the others.

"The negro who escaped will carry the news of our attack to all the neighboring villages. The natives will now be on their guard against us in this neighborhood," said El Hassen to Broderick, as the party marched along.

"Yes, and the tribes may assemble and give us battle as they did once years ago in the Congo country," replied Broderick.

The camp of the Arabs was not far distant, and it was soon reached. There Frank saw the fair young girl who had chosen him as her slave.

That she would be a merciful mistress he could not doubt, and he wondered and conjectured much about her.

She called the Arab sheik father. But Frank knew that they were not really parent and child. That there was a mystery about beautiful Zara Frank was sure.

She had awakened great interest in his heart, and he longed to find out who she was and how she came there among the Arab slave-hunters.

The darkness of night soon fell, and when the Arab camp, save for the march of sentinels who guarded it, became quiet and Frank found himself alone, bound to a tree, Zara suddenly appeared before him.

She came so silently that he was not aware of her presence until she placed her hand upon his arm lightly.

"I have come to set you free. But tell me, do you think you

can ever escape from this land if I let you go?" said the girl, in good English.

"I will try. Only let me once get clear of these yellow man hunters, and I'll attempt to reach Zanzibar, or some settlement on the coast."

"Then you shall go."

She cut the cords that secured Frank as she spoke.

"Tell me," he asked, "how you came here?"

"I know not. My earliest recollection is of the Arabs, and a home with them in the north. I know I must be a European, but I am ignorant of all else regarding myself."

"But you call El Hassen your father."

"I was taught to do so from earliest childhood."

"You speak English well, and yet you say you have passed all your life among the Arabs?"

"A white slave, who died at El Hassen's walled town in the Soudan, taught me the language, and he was the first one who convinced me I was not of the Arab race. But now you must go. Farewell, we may never meet again; but take this in memory of Zara the unknown."

The maiden as she spoke placed a gold locket in Frank's hand. He secured it on his person, and then pressing Zara's hand he started to glide away.

Stealthily he crept through the tall grass and passed the guards unseen.

He was just about to enter an adjacent jungle when all at once there came a terrific crash in the cover and a terrible roar shook the very ground.

Frank instinctively leaped backward.

At the same instant a magnificent specimen of the African lion bounded into view.

The great terror of the African forest alighted within three feet of Frank.

And then came the almost deafening explosion of a heavy caliber rifle. The lion leaped into the air and fell with a bullet in his heart.

In his final leap the huge animal struck Frank and hurled him upon the ground. But the agile boy scrambled up, little the worse for the accident, and then he beheld Wamba, the native who had escaped from the Arab, and whose life he had saved, standing before him, with one of the heavy elephant rifles they had brought with them from Cape Town in his hand.

"White marse sabe Wamba. Him come help Marse Frank," said the grateful African.

He had snatched up one of the elephant rifles belonging to Frank's party when he fled from the Arabs at the native village.

"We must run for our lives, Wamba. You are a noble fellow. Come, come; I hear the Arabs shouting to each other. The camp is alarmed," cried Frank.

Then he and the giant African darted away.

The moon gave sufficient light to guide them, and they did not halt for a long time. Before they had proceeded far they could hear the voices of the Arabs in different directions shouting to each other, and Frank knew his escape was discovered, and that the slave-hunters were searching for him.

But ere long the sounds of the Arabs died away in the distance, and then Frank and Wamba halted to rest.

The native explained that after he fled from the village he had doubled on his tracks, and watched the Arabs and followed them, bent on helping Frank off.

He said he was creeping up intent on passing the guards when the lion made his leap at Frank.

"Now what do? Dis am strange country Wamba don't know the way, only by route we come. De had Niam-Niams kill and eat us if we go that way alone," said Wamba in conclusion.

"That's so. But we must get to the seaboard. Zanzibar is the nearest white settlement. Wamba, we must try to get a native guide to conduct us there."

The herculean negro shook his head.

"Bad men all the way east to big water. Da kill us maybe. We hab to travel nights, hide days when near villages."

Frank saw that the prospect was disheartening.

Hundreds of miles of the African wilderness lay between him and safety. Danger of all sorts lurked in the way. The boy weighed all the chances. He longed for arms. But aside from the elephant rifle Wamba had secured, they were without weapons.

Suddenly Frank said:

"Wamba, have you any ammunition?"

"No, Mars Frank," replied the black.

"We must have ammunition and more weapons."

"How get 'em?"

As has been seen Wamba spoke English as well as most Africans. He had frequently been engaged by white hunters to accompany them into the interior, and thus he had acquired the language, to a degree.

Wamba looked as if he thought his question was a poser. But Frank instantly answered it.

"We must get arms and ammunition from the Arabs," said he.

Wamba uttered a surprised exclamation, and said:

"How do dat? Arabs maybe get us."

"We must steal into their camp, and get away with the arms and ammunition we want undetected. I believe our lives depend upon securing the means of defending ourselves against savage men and ferocious wild animals, and I'll take any risk to get them."

"When go?"

"This very night. The Arabs will never dream of our returning."

Frank and Wamba had halted in a little open glen, and a moment subsequently there was a suspicious, rustling sound in the surrounding undergrowth, and as the boy and his black comrade started and listened in alarm a dozen dark forms came crashing out of the cover.

They were Arabs of El Hassen's band. Not far on the rear of the fugitives' trail they had left footprints which had been seen by the searching slave-hunters, who, then deciding that their quarry was near, advanced almost in silence bent on a surprise.

It was well-nigh successful.

CHAPTER VI.

LOST IN THE JUNGLE.

With shrill, exultant shouts, the Arabs closed in upon Frank and Wamba from all sides. They counted on their recapture now as a foregone conclusion.

But they met with a surprise. Wamba was a Zulu by birth, though he had spent some years among the Kaffirs, with whom he had entered the service of Frank and Jason Broderick.

The fiercest fighting blood of Africa flowed in the veins of the giant warrior of the Zulus, and now his blood was up.

A wild war cry, such as has often echoed over many a bloody battle-ground in Africa, burst from the lips of the Zulu.

Then the heavy elephant rifle, which he wielded as a war-club, began to do fearful execution. Man after man of the Arabs went down before the terrific onslaught of the giant. He seemed to bear a charmed life. The bullets whistled all around him, but he was not seriously wounded.

Frank fought at the side of the warrior of the Zulus, and through the Arabs, who environed them as will a wall of human foes, they forced their way.

The terrible death-dealing gun, clubbed in the hands of Wamba, shattered the skulls of the Arab slavers whom it hit as though they were egg-shells.

The huge Zulu's pathway was strewn with his foes, and his wonderful struggle struck terror to the hearts of the slave-hunters. Frank and his comrade gained the jungle, after a horrible combat, and then they fled they knew not whither; for they heard reinforcements rapidly coming to the support of the Arabs.

The fugitives fled on and on until they had placed a long distance between themselves and the scene of the terrible conflict in which they had just engaged.

Then, when well-nigh exhausted, they halted and rested until day dawned.

Then, as they glanced about them, and their surroundings were distinctly revealed, they found themselves in the midst of a jungle.

They started in a direction which Frank thought was the course to the sea. But the conviction which neither had yet spoken was strong in the hearts of each. They kept on for some time. But there were no indications to show that they were getting near the confines of the jungle.

Finally Frank said:

"Wamba, we are lost! Oh, Heaven! what a fate! Lost among the slave-hunters in the jungles of Central Africa!"

Wamba grinly answered:

"We no find way now—maybe some time. Wamba am Zulu. Zulu nebber stay lost in jungle. White boy tired; he rest. Wamba go dis way an' dat—see if he find way out ob jungle; den come back."

"As you will, Wamba. I confess I am too tired to go further just now. But if you should fail to come back—oh, then I should despair indeed, for I should be alone—alone and lost in the trackless wilderness of the slave land."

"Wamba come back sure."

"Then go, and God give you success to find the way out of this jungle."

The Zulu grasped Frank's hand and pressed it to his forehead after the manner of his tribe, as a sign of devotion.

Then he went forward, forcing his way through the tangled growth with surprising skill.

And Frank sank down to rest, and in a moment or two the sounds made by the Zulu died away in the distance.

A terribly oppressive sense of solitude came upon Frank when he found himself indeed alone.

"Oh, if I only had a compass. Then I could shape our course for the sea. But now the sun must serve me instead," thought Frank.

Then as the time went by and he reclined on the ground and awaited the return of Wamba, he thought of the fair young girl whom he had left among the Arab slave hunters.

Then he produced the locket of gold that Zara had given him at the moment of their parting.

The sun was high now, and its scorching rays descended upon the jungle unobstructedly, and sent a shower of golden rays flashing in all directions as a reflection from the polished surface of Zara's gift.

And Frank examined the trinket.

With great curiosity he turned it in his hand and looked at both sides.

Then he saw an inscription on the case, and with eager curiosity he read it thus:

"Alma, from her father, Christmas, 18—."

"No doubt Alma is the girl's real given name, instead of Zara," thought Frank.

He then tried to open the locket, and after some effort he succeeded in doing so.

There was no picture in the locket, and Frank was a trifle disappointed. He was about to close the locket when he made a discovery. He detected some fine writing traced on the inner surface of the locket.

The writing was in English, and Frank read it thus:

"Wrecked on the coast of the great desert, I, John Mathews, of Boston, Mass., U. S. A., and my wife and infant child, have been captured by the Arabs. A sheik's wife seems to have taken a fancy to our baby girl, and she may be spared, but I am doomed, for I shot two Arabs before I was captured. My wife was wounded in the fight, and is dying. I trace this in the locket worn by my child in the hope that it may one day lead to her identification."

"Can it be that Zara has never read this? It must be so. Ah, I forgot, no doubt the unfortunate girl cannot read, and so all this is unknown to her."

Frank was sure, of course, that Zara was John Mathews' baby daughter, grown to young maidenhood.

"It is terrible to think that sweet young girl must end her days among the cruel Arabs—the murderers of her ship-wrecked parents. Would that I could rescue her and restore her to her kindred in America, for she must have relatives living, I presume."

Thus Frank meditated, and truth to say, he felt that in the beautiful captive of the Arab slave-hunters, he had met the girl whom he could love with all his soul.

But after a time exhausted nature claimed recuperation, and Frank fell asleep under the shading branches of a trailing bush.

How long he had slept he did not know, but all at once he awoke.

Instantly he started up.

The impression was strong upon his mind that he had been awakened by some strange sound.

Frank listened. Then he knew he had not been mistaken.

A strange rumbling sound seemed fairly to shake the earth. It came nearer and nearer. What was it? At first Frank could not tell.

It seemed that scarcely a moment had elapsed since the first sound, like the rapid movements of an army of giants, reached Frank's hearing, when there came a deafening chorus of shrill, trumpeting screams not unlike the whistles of a hundred locomotives.

"Elephants! A vast herd stampeded and coming this way!" cried Frank.

It was so, and Frank understood his peril. He must flee for his life.

Longer delay would have been fatal. Frank darted forward before the mighty herd.

But suddenly Frank made another terrible discovery.

He saw masses of black smoke rolling up ahead of him, and the odor of burning wood impregnated the air.

"The jungle is on fire!" exclaimed the boy.

Then Frank's heart seemed to stand still with the horror of it all. There was no retreat, and the flames were before him.

The conflagration increased. The resinous trees blazed like pillars of fire, and the flames wrapped them from roots to apex.

The near approach of the elephants drove Frank on. Then all at once he vanished.

The lad had stumbled into a great pit dug by the natives to capture the elephant. His fall had opened a hole in the cover of the great pitfall, and as elephants always avoid a hole in the ground, the herd now swept by on each side of the pit, and in a moment or so all had passed the trap.

Frank was not hurt by his fall. He remained where he was,

and the advancing flames swept over the pit. It was covered with a thatched roof, over which was a layer of earth. It was pretty warm for Frank, and he was almost suffocated while the flames raged above him, but finally the conflagration was passed, and he climbed out of the pitfall.

The scene which he then looked upon was one of desolation. The jungle was swept away, and in its place remained a blackened plain.

Frank noted that the flames suddenly ceased when they reached a certain point to the southward, and he judged there they had encountered a lake or a river.

He started to go back to the place where he had parted with Wamba, and then he found that the face of the country was so entirely changed that he could not be certain in which way to go. Frank was looking in the direction in which the conflagration had gone, when he heard a chorus of fierce yells behind him, and turning in that direction he beheld a band of a score of naked Niam cannibals rushing toward him brandishing their war-clubs.

CHAPTER VII.

CAPTURED BY THE CANNIBALS.

Frank Stanhope ran for his life once more, as he beheld the fierce Niam-Niams coming in pursuit of him.

Not far in the rear, whence the savage blacks came, a deep gully ran transversely across the blackened plain, and the Niam-Niams had crept up along that gully. Thus it was they had approached so near before Frank discovered them.

And it was only by accident that the cannibal Africans sighted Frank. They had sought shelter from the conflagration underneath the overhanging walls of the gully or "wad-dy," as such a defile is called by the natives.

The barbarous negroes were now intent upon the capture of the white lad.

The Niam-Niams are remarkably fleet, and after a short run Frank saw to his intense horror that they were rapidly gaining. But he struggled on desperately. All was in vain, however. He was run down, and a few moments later he was surrounded by the black barbarians.

A horrible band they were.

The dusky savage men were of medium height, with large heads, and the wool upon them arranged in fantastic tufts. Wide belts of animals' skins were about their loins. The bare portions of their bodies were hideously tattooed, and their necks were ornamented with necklaces made of human teeth.

The cannibals were armed with lances, bows and arrows, and a long blade of sharp metal fastened to a stout stick.

Jabbering and gesticulating in a manner characteristic of the savage African tribes the Niam-Niams pounced upon Frank, and bound his hands behind his back.

Then a coil of twisted grass, as strong as any ordinary rope, was secured around his neck, and he was led away to the eastward by the triumphant band, who seemed to be very exultant over his capture.

After a march of some miles, a large village of huts, not unlike those at the mission village, came in sight, and Frank was escorted into it.

The Niam-Niams were at home now, and their appearance, with their captive, was greeted with shouts and yells, as the entire population, men, women, and children, rushed out to meet them.

The boy, in the midst of all this, was thinking of his chances of getting away. In the thought that Wamba, the Zulu giant, was somewhere in the neighborhood, he found cause for hope. He thought his native friend might yet come to his rescue.

But in this thought he was not destined to find consolation long. As he was led forward into the village he suddenly made a discovery which thrilled him with consternation and surprise.

Bound to a post in front of one of the largest huts in the village, Frank saw Wamba, the Zulu.

The African giant had also been captured by the Niam-Niams. Seeing this, Frank gave way to despair most completely.

He was secured to a post near Wamba, and then as the Niam-Niams withdrew, apparently to consult about the fate of their prisoners, the captives found an opportunity to converse.

"It's all up with us now," said Frank, disconsolately.

Wamba nodded an assent, and then said:

"It was bad dat we got caught. Great heap black men come quick on Wamba. He make big fight. Kill one, two, seben, fore get caught."

Frank now told how he was captured.

While Frank and Wamba were awaiting the fate that menaced them the Arab slave-hunters were still looking for them.

Jason Broderick's consternation at the escape of his cousin was complete.

"Furies!" he cried, when the first search for the boy had proved futile, and the band who had engaged in the jungle battle with Frank and the Zulu made their report. "I told you, El Hassen, that the girl would set him free. If that boy escapes from Africa I am lost. His evidence will ruin me. I shall never dare return to America, and all my plots for Mathew Stanhope's millions will fail."

"We must not give up the hunt for the white boy. He shall not escape us. The Arabs of my band are keen-scented trailers. We shall take the boy and the big Zulu again," replied El Hassen.

"And then," said Jason Broderick under his breath, "I'll make sure of him. Fool that I was not to do so before. I can only feel positively safe when Frank Stanhope is dead. Yes, it shall be that. Better so than to sell him into slavery."

"But," continued El Hassen after a pause, "I am not sure that Zara set the white boy free. It may be that the Zulu crept into the camp and cut the lad's bonds. Yes, I think that must be the truth. Ho, Baba!"

An Arab approached, responsive to the sheik's call.

"Baba, did Zara leave her tent last night after the guards were set?" asked El Hassen.

It was now the morning after Frank's escape from the slave-hunters.

"No, sheik," replied Baba, promptly.

He was the special bodyguard of Zara, and it was his duty to sleep across the door of the tent every night. But when Zara left the shelter to set Frank free, she had passed the sleeping Baba without awakening him. He did not know she had left the tent, for she had regained it without disturbing him.

"You see I am right. The Zulu is responsible for the escape of the boy," said El Hassen.

"It may be so. But, after all, it matters not. He has escaped, and there is the end of it," said Broderick, impatiently.

Not long after sunrise El Hassen divided his party into three bands, to scour the country in search of the white boy.

With one of the searching parties went the sheik, Broderick and Zara mounted on swift-footed donkeys.

"I am troubled by one thought. The boy may fall into the hands of El Boukir, my old rival in the slave trade. Three days since we met his band, and they are not far away now, I think, for they were traveling in almost the same direction as my band, looking for native villages to surprise," said El Hassen, as he and his comrades rode forward.

"But the boy belongs to you," replied Broderick.

"Not if El Boukir captures him. Such is the code among us slavers, as you ought to remember."

"Then we will buy the boy if El Boukir captures him. Better so than that he should make good his escape. But we will not borrow trouble further on that score."

Toward the hour of mid-day a scout sent forward by El Hassen came in and reported that he had discovered a native village some miles to the eastward, and that the white boy and the giant Zulu were held prisoners there by the natives.

"Bravo!" exclaimed Broderick. "Now we will surprise the native village and not only recapture the two fugitives, but you can secure more black slaves, I make no doubt."

"Yes, it shall be done. Call in the other parties, Baba," said El Hassen.

His favorite henchman thereupon put his fingers to his lips and sent forth a peculiar call that rang out shrill and piercing, so that it could be heard for a long distance.

It was the hailing sign of the Arabs of old—a call that had often echoed over the trackless sands of the great desert.

The call was answered from two different directions, and El Hassen's party waited for his followers to join him.

Meantime Zara was pale with alarm for Frank's safety. The young girl was experiencing a sentiment that was new to her. Frank Stanhope's image dwelt in her heart, and she felt that she would never be happy among the Arabs again. Love was at work. The maiden passed the mystic portal, where Cupid keeps watch and ward, when she met Frank, and she longed to save the imperilled youth, who had become all in all to her.

But she saw no way to accomplish her wish then. She felt that she must bide her time and watch and wait.

The rattle of volley after volley of musketry sounded in quick succession from afar, mingled with the sound of distant yells and shouts.

A fierce conflict was in progress not far away, but none of El Hassen's men were engaged in it, the girl knew, for she now saw them all approaching.

But surely the voices of Arabs sounded from the scene of conflict.

CHAPTER VIII.

A GAME FOR HUMAN STAKES.

The Arab scout who had discovered the village of the Niam-Niams where Frank and the Zulu were held captive now exclaimed:

"Oh, sheik, the battle we hear going on is taking place at the native village. El Boukir's men have attacked it. Well I know their yells."

"It is so! By the beard of the prophet, El Boukir is ahead of us!" cried El Hassen, excitedly.

"Then let us advance. Not a moment is to be lost. By joining Boukir's men in the attack we may gain a right to a share of the captives and select our two fugitives," said Jason Broderick.

The two divisions of El Hassen's band that were approaching now arrived, and the reunited force at once started forward toward the Niam-Niam village at the greatest possible speed.

The scout of the band was right when he said it was the rival brigade of slave-hunters under El Boukir that had attacked the village of the Niam-Niams.

Not long after the arrival of Frank's captors at the village, and while the natives seemed yet to be deliberating regarding him and Wamba a company of about two hundred and fifty warthy slave-hunters of the Arab race, who differed not materially in appearance from El Hassen's band, was stealthily

approaching the village of the Niam-Niams from the southward under cover of a jungle.

This band was led by the Sheik El Boukir. They knew the savage character of the Niam-Niams, but counted on their numbers and their firearms for victory.

The usual tactics which are employed by the Arab slave-hunters in Africa were adopted in this instance.

The attack on the village was made in almost the same manner as El Hassen fell upon the mission village, and the Arabs managed to get close to the town before they were discovered by the natives.

Then they charged forward, yelling with all their might and discharging volley after volley from their carbines.

The Niam-Niams fought desperately. The battle raged furiously for a time, and then Frank and the Zulu seemed to be entirely forgotten by their captors.

Charge after charge was made upon the village by El Boukir's slavers. But the Niams were entirely a different race from the peaceful blacks El Hassen's band had encountered at the mission village. There was no such easy victory for the Arabs in this instance.

Three times they were repulsed by the Niams. But the fourth charge carried all before it. The ranks of the Niam-Niam warriors were already decimated by the bullets of their foes. Despair seized upon them, and they retreated. The Arabs pursued and the retreat soon became a complete rout. Then scores of men, women, and children fell into the hands of the Arabs.

El Boukir, the sheik, uttered a cry of surprise, as, when the conflict was over, he found Frank and Wamba.

The circumstance that they were bound explained that they were captives, and as he could speak broken English, the sheik began to question Frank, after releasing him and the Zulu. The lad told that he had been captured by the Niams, that he was a peaceful traveler on his way to the coast, and diplomatically hinted that he and Wamba had become separated from a large band of English explorers, who might be expected to come up at any moment.

Upon hearing this, El Boukir's manner became decidedly more respectful than it had been at first, and he asked:

"How many men in English band?"

"Oh, six or eight hundred. A small army, in fact," replied Frank, carelessly.

El Boukir knew very well, though Frank did not, that a large English expedition, sent out to suppress the slave trade along the lower Nile, was in Africa.

The sheik concluded that was the party Frank belonged to. He had a wholesome fear of English vengeance, and Frank could not have hit upon a better way to secure good treatment at the hands of the crafty slaver.

Frank was not slow to note the impression his haphazard statement had made upon the Arab, and he said, in a tone that seemed to indicate the thing was a matter of course:

"Now, my friend, I'll set out with my black servant to find my party. I am sure I shall not go far before I meet them. I am obliged to you for setting us free."

El Boukir's face was a study. Frank saw that he was secretly desirous, above all things, of making him and Wamba slaves, but feared to do so.

Frank and Wamba experienced a feeling of suspense.

Everything depended upon the success of Frank's ruse.

Evidently El Boukir decided it would not be wise to molest or detain Frank. He did not offer to do so as the boy and his black comrade began to walk away.

But the fates themselves seemed to have conspired to prevent the escape of the fugitives.

Just then El Hassen's band burst out of an adjacent woods,

and the sheik and Jason Broderick dashed toward the village ahead of their comrades.

El Hassen shouting the while at the top of his voice:

"Do not let them go! They escaped from me! Hold the white boy and the black!"

Hearing this, it suddenly dawned upon the mind of El Boukir that he might have been deceived—that the white boy had duped him by a falsehood.

He at once shouted an order to his men in the Arab language.

Frank and Wamba were not yet clear of the village. El Boukir's men were yet moving about hither and yon all about them. As soon as the sheik shouted his command his men began to close in upon Frank and Wamba.

Then they made a desperate dash, and more than one Arab went down under terrific blows dealt by Wamba's naked iron fists; for the Niams had taken away his gun, and he had only his hands to fight with now.

But overpowering numbers conquered. Frank and Wamba were secured, and El Hassan, riding up, claimed them as his captives.

"Hold! I deny your claim. Captors are keepers. The white slave and the giant black are mine!" cried El Boukir.

El Hassen would have liked to enforce his demand by a resort to force, for the rival slavers were not on the best of terms. But his band was outnumbered by the force under El Boukir.

"I'll buy the two slaves—the white boy and the Zulu," said Broderick, eagerly.

"No. They are not for sale. The Sultan of Fezzan wishes a white slave boy. The great sultan will pay thrice the sum in gold for him that you can command, I think."

Broderick had a thousand pounds in English money in his treasure-belt.

"I'll give you one thousand English pounds for the white boy, and you can keep the black," he said desperately.

Frank shuddered. It was a moment of dread suspense for him while he waited to hear the answer of the Arab.

He read the terrible look in Broderick's eyes aright, and he felt that if the arch villain succeeded in purchasing him an awful fate would surely be his doom.

But El Boukir did not hesitate long in answering Broderick.

"No," replied the Arab sheik scornfully. "Thrice the sum you name the sultan will pay."

Broderick was at his wit's end. True, he thought the chances were against Frank's making his escape if he was sold to the Sultan of Fezzan. And yet since Frank had eluded his captors, as we know, Broderick feared to leave him alive in Africa. The boy had exhibited a spirit and daring which made Broderick change his mind about selling him into slavery, as we have seen.

But now El Hassan thought of a way whereby he might again regain possession of Frank if fortune favored him.

He knew that El Boukir was a great gambler, and so he said, pointing to the long line of black slaves which had been captured at the mission village, and who were now brought up by his rear guard:

"El Boukir, I'll stake fifty of my blacks against the white boy in our great Arablan game of helga. What say you? Dare you play me for the boy?"

"Ay, no man ever challenged El Boukir to play in vain. Come, the game shall decide the ownership of the boy," replied El Boukir.

"Good! Let us not delay," assented El Hassen.

The game of helga is a great favorite with Arab gamblers, and is played in the following manner:

A square is first traced in the earth. In it a number of round holes are scooped out. The players sit opposite each

other, and each is provided with pellets of ivory which are placed in the holes. The game proceeds by moving the pellets from hole to hole, somewhat similar to moving draughts upon a checker board.

The ground was prepared and then, while the two bands of slave hunters looked on, and Frank and his black comrade watched the game with a breathless interest, which Zara's manner plainly showed she shared, El Boukir and El Hassen seated themselves and the play began. It was a game for human stakes.

The fate of the brave young American hung upon the issue. Little wonder that in the intensity of his interest he heeded nothing but the progress of the game, which was very simple and which he soon began to comprehend.

The Arabs all seemed deeply interested.

Some moments had passed, and the game was going on with varying success for each of the players, when all at once Frank became conscious that Wamba was gone from his side. He glanced about quickly, but he saw nothing of the giant Zulu.

CHAPTER IX.

FRANK IN THE POWER OF BRODERICK.

No one had observed Wamba's departure. The cunning Zulu had planned to steal away while the attention of all was centered upon the game the rival sheiks were engaged in.

Wamba had a well-defined plan in mind looking to the escape of both Frank and himself.

He had observed that the Arabs had stacked arms near an adjacent hut, and that with their carbines they had left several donkeys, laden with ammunition and supplies.

Wamba glided behind the hut, and then quickly crept to the carbines and secured two of them and a large bag of ammunition, from the back of one of the pack donkeys.

The Zulu also took a hatchet and a large Arab dagger, which he found conveniently at hand.

Then he crawled away through the grass until he reached the timber beyond. At the foot of a tree in a thicket, he secreted one of the carbines and a part of the ammunition. The hatchet he attached to his belt, and the dagger he also secured there. Wamba thoroughly understood the use of fire-arms, and now, armed with carbine, hatchet and dagger, he felt like himself, and ready for a desperate fight at any moment.

Meantime, after Wamba's flight, the game of helga proceeded. Fortune fluctuated for a time almost equally between the two chiefs. But finally El Hassen won, and Jason Broderick uttered an exclamation of keen satisfaction, and he hissed in Frank's ear:

"You are mine now, and you shall not slip through my hands again. You shall leave your bones to bleach in the African jungle, and never escape to come between me and the possession of the Stanhope millions."

Reluctantly El Boukir surrendered Frank to his successful opponent in the game, and then Wamba was missed. At once search was made for him, but no trace of the Zulu was discovered.

An hour later the two bands of Arabs had separated, and the company commanded by El Hassen, with which Frank was forced to march, moved northward.

The slave-hunters camped at night-fall in an open country, where green savannahs and luxuriant vegetation abounded.

During the march Frank had not obtained an opportunity to speak with Zara, much as he desired to do so. But when the band went into camp the maiden came to the lad.

"I am very sorry you were recaptured, and yet I cannot tell how glad I was to see you again. You are almost the only one of my own race I have ever met, you know," said Zara.

Frank answered earnestly:

"Fair Zara, you have not once been absent from my heart since first we met. Under any other circumstances I should rejoice that fate had brought us together again.

Then he went on to relate his thrilling story—telling Jason Broderick's inhuman treachery, and ending with the statement that he believed the villain meant to murder him.

"No, no. That shall never be! El Hassen gave you to me. The sheik will protect you even from Jason Broderick, the renegade. You are mine."

"Yes, your slave. Willingly would I submit to such sweet bondage in our own land. Zara, I love you. Have you no wish to leave the Arabs to return to your own land and kindred?"

"I have always been kindly treated by the Arabs. I know not where to seek for my kindred, if such I have in the land beyond the sea."

"I will tell you, Zara; can you read?"

"No, no. But how can you tell me aught of my kindred?"

Frank drew forth the locket she had given him, and read the inscription traced on the inner surface of its case.

"Horror!" exclaimed Zara. "The people I have passed almost all my days among—perhaps the very man I have been taught to call my father—murdered my poor, ship-wrecked parents! I can never more be content to dwell among them. Their hands are red with innocent blood."

"Yes, Zara. If I escape I mean to rescue you; for I am convinced that you are virtually a captive, though treated as the sheik's daughter."

"I doubt it not. You have told me that you loved me. I feel no shame in acknowledging that I return your love, and if you will take me home—oh, sweet word!—home to the land of my parents, how happy we may be!"

"I'll do it, Zara—do it or perish," answered the brave lad, with enthusiastic determination in his tone.

But while the youthful lovers were thus conversing, El Hassen and Jason Broderick were engaged in a discussion, the outcome of which was destined to influence the destiny of Frank and Zara.

"El Hassen," said Jason Broderick, "I have changed my mind regarding the disposition to be made of the white boy."

"How so, comrade?" inquired the sheik.

"If sold into slavery there would always remain the chance of his escaping and returning to America to denounce me, and so I have decided that he must die."

"You forget, my comrade," rejoined the Arab, while his swarthy face grew darker. "The boy is mine by right of capture, and by gift he has become the property of my daughter. He shall not die."

"Ha, ha, ha! You are blind to your own interests, if I have not read all the signs wrong. I believe that one day it is your purpose to make this beautiful European girl whom you have taught to call you father, your wife."

"You have penetrated my secret. I love Zara, not as a father. One day she shall be my wife," assented El Hassen.

"Then you have been a great fool to give the handsome white lad to the girl for her slave. Look yonder. The maid is with the youth now. They are lovers already. See!"

As Broderick spoke he pointed at Frank and Zara. They were distinctly visible from the door of El Hassen's tent, where the two men stood.

The young couple did not know they were observed, and at the moment when Jason Broderick pointed them out to El Hassen, Frank pressed a kiss upon Zara's brow—a pure, true token of his deathless devotion.

And El Hassen saw it. His brow contracted. His swarthy face was convulsed with an expression of jealous rage.

"The Christian dog!" he hissed, through his set teeth. "He has dared to make love to Zara!"

"Yes, and with excellent success, I should say," sneered Broderick. "Come, what say you now? Shall the boy die?"

"It is not necessary. He shall never speak to the maiden again, for I will send him away to the Sultan of Fezzan. It is not policy to throw away the gold the rich sultan will pay for a white slave."

"Well, have your own way. But I believe you will yet regret it if you do not put the boy to death."

El Hassen shook his head, and then he strode angrily toward Frank and Zara. They heard his footsteps, but he was close upon them first. As Zara turned toward him he caught her arm and dragged her rudely away.

"Dog of a Christian, if you dare again to speak to my daughter you shall perish by the bastinado!" El Hassen called out to Frank.

Then he half dragged Zara to his own tent and thrust her within it. Releasing herself from his hold, Zara confronted the sheik with spirit.

Her beautiful eyes were flashing. Her cheeks were all aglow, and she was more lovely than ever.

"What means this violent conduct, sheik?" she demanded. She did not call him father now.

"It means, my beautiful Zara, that I love you, and have reared you to become my wife," he answered.

"Never, never! I believe you are my father's murderer!" cried Zara, and she thought:

"Now indeed I must escape, or meet a fate worse than death. I never thought of such a thing as this. Oh, Heaven send me help!"

Meantime, just after El Hassen entered the tent a black face peered through the door behind him. It was Wamba the Zulu. Startling incidents were about to ensue.

The Zulu had come to save Frank, and now he meant to rescue the maiden too.

He glided into the tent as Zara last spoke, and as El Hassen's back was turned he did not see him. But Wamba made an accidental sound. El Hassen wheeled like a flash.

The succeeding instant he and the Zulu stood face to face.

CHAPTER X.

WAMBA'S DARING STRATAGEM.

Wamba, the giant Zulu, was intent upon the accomplishment of a daring ruse. The cunning native was taking desperate chances, but such a course accorded well with his character.

He had observed that the white captive was more closely guarded than heretofore. The sheik had posted two Arabs near the tree to which Frank was secured.

The Zulu saw that it would be impossible for him to gain Frank's side and liberate him unless he adopted some stratagem.

El Hassen's tent was near the confines of the open space in which the slave hunters had made their camp, and Wamba, owing to this circumstance, had succeeded in getting to it undiscovered.

As the Arab sheik turned and saw Wamba inside the tent, he opened his lips to utter a shout of alarm.

The Zulu knew if El Hassen uttered a single outcry all was lost. The camp would instantly be alarmed, scores of the sheik's fierce followers would come rushing to the tent, and

not only would the attempt to rescue Frank result in failure, but the would-be rescuer could scarcely hope to get away himself.

And the daring ruse that Wamba had in mind required that not the slightest suspicion of his presence should be experienced by the Arabs.

Before El Hassen could utter the shout of alarm that trembled upon his lips Wamba leaped at him. The Zulu clutched the Arab sheik by the throat and bore him to the ground.

Zara uttered a frightened exclamation.

Then she recognized Wamba as Frank's comrade, and she remained silent, reassured by the discovery.

There was a brief and terrible struggle upon the ground between the giant black and the Arab.

Then Wamba arose. But El Hassen remained motionless. He was not dead, but the Zulu had strangled him into insensibility.

"White girl am Mars Frank's friend, so Zulu. Come sabe Frank. Girl go. Wamba make fool ob Arabs, git Frank away, maybe," said the Zulu.

Zara left the tent of the sheik and entered the smaller tent near by, which she occupied separately.

Some moments elapsed.

Then Wamba came out of the Arab's tent, but he had undergone a complete transformation. The Zulu had clothed himself in the sheik's costume, and drawn the Arab's bonnet well down over his face, so as almost to conceal his features.

El Hassen was a large man, and by stooping as he walked Wamba brought his height down. In the semi-light of the by no means brilliant moon the African would readily pass for El Hassen, unless close inspection was made.

From the door of her tent Zara saw Wamba come forth. Having a hint of the African's purpose, she quickly penetrated Wamba's disguise as he passed close by her, lifting the Arab's bonnet, and giving her a chance to see his features quite distinctly.

Jason Broderick had now retired within one of the Arab tents, which had been set apart for his use.

Wamba strode toward Frank, imitating the gait and manner of the Arab sheik excellently.

He passed the two men who were especially detailed to guard the boy, and they grunted out a respectful salutation, such as they were accustomed to give the sheik.

Wamba had left El Hassen bound and gagged in his tent, and the only fear the Zulu entertained on his account was that some one might visit his tent and discover him.

The Zulu reached Frank's side.

"Wamba come. Now get away," said the dusky rescuer, laconically. Then he untied the lad and signaled him to follow him as he strode back boldly toward El Hassen's tent.

Frank obeyed the signal, but he was never more astounded or rejoiced. He could not at first scarcely credit the evidence of his senses that the Zulu was really there in the garb of El Hassen. He wondered how it had all transpired.

The two Arab guards saw nothing out of the way.

They probably thought the sheik was conducting the white lad to his tent to question him, if indeed they gave the occurrence any considerations.

Wamba and Frank safely entered the sheik's tent, and then the boy, seeing El Hassen upon the ground bound and gagged, understood it all, and he grasped the hand of the Zulu as he said earnestly:

"Wamba, you are a black hero!"

"Uw, good," replied Wamba, looking perplexed. He probably had no idea what a hero was, but took it for granted it meant something good.

"Now we crawl away," added Wamba, and drawing the

dagger which he had secured at the Niam-Niam village, he slashed an opening in the rear wall of the sheik's tent.

But at that moment Zara entered.

The maiden sprang to Frank and cried:

"Take me with you! I cannot, dare not remain longer with the Arabs! At last I know the truth. Oh, Frank, El Hassen means to compel me to become his wife!"

"His wife! The old rascal! And he taught you to regard him as your father!" exclaimed Frank.

"Yes, yes. Oh, say that I may go with you."

"You may! You may! Think you that I could leave you to the mercy of El Hassen now. No, no, my love. We will escape or perish together!"

Frank took both her hands as he spoke, and led her to the opening in the rear wall of the tent.

Wamba hastily followed them, after discarding the costume of the Arab sheik.

"If our flight is not discovered until morning we shall gain a splendid start," said Frank, in response to some remark by Zara.

The fugitives journeyed all night. Still they discovered no signs of pursuit.

Zara was completely fagged out by dawn. Then the Zulu carried her. But before midday a halt was resolved upon, and in a dense thicket, near a river which Frank believed to be a branch of the lower Nile, they stopped.

Zara soon fell asleep.

Then leaving Frank to watch her, Wamba went along the river bank looking for game. He first made a rude bow and a number of arrows, though, for he did not want to fire his carbine if he could avoid so doing, lest the Arabs might hear the report.

It was necessary that game should be secured for food.

After Wamba had gone Frank fell asleep, despite all his efforts to keep awake.

All at once a terrible scream uttered by Zara awakened him.

Frank leaped up.

Then he beheld a sight that almost paralyzed him with alarm.

An enormous gorilla was darting away into the jungle with Zara in his arms.

It was a moment for swift and decisive action. Once the gorilla got into the depths of the jungle with Zara it might be impossible to follow him up.

The peril of the maiden was intense and terrible. Frank snatched up his carbine and leveled it at the gorilla.

Forgotten now was all thought of caution regarding the discharge of firearms that might lead the slave-hunters down upon him.

He thought only of saving Zara. There was great danger of hitting her instead of the monster ape. But Frank took a careful aim at one of the gorilla's eyes and pressed the trigger.

At the same moment Wamba appeared upon the scene, gesticulating excitedly as he advanced.

CHAPTER XI.

A RIVER CHASE—OVER THE FALLS.

Frank scarcely noted the return of Wamba, so excited was he about the fate of Zara and the result of his shot at the gorilla.

As the loud detonation of the carbine echoed through the jungle, the monster ape dropped his fair burden and bounded into the air.

An awful, half human yell came from the eerie monster of the jungles, and falling heavily, he clawed up the earth furiously for a few moments in an awful, frantic death struggle, and then lay still.

Zara, overcome by her terror, had fainted.

Frank raised her in his arms, and then he caught the import of an excited jumble of words uttered by Wamba.

"Arab come. Bad men close. Um follow us. We get caught. Come, run! Hurry, quick! Da hear gun! Now find us sure. Me carry gal!" cried Wamba.

He had sighted the Arabs of El Hassen's band while looking for game.

Almost as he spoke the Zulu caught Zara up in his arms and bounded away.

Frank followed.

As Wamba had said, the report of Frank's carbine had been heard by the Arabs. But a few moments had elapsed when the boy heard their terrible yells.

Frank and Wamba shaped their course for the river.

They soon reached its banks. The river was of considerable size, but a broad and sluggish stream. Wamba had found a native canoe while looking for game.

The Zulu pulled the canoe out of some rushes that concealed it, and quickly embarked in it with Frank and Zara.

The girl had returned to consciousness now, and she asked in anxiety:

"Are we pursued?"

Frank told her the truth, and just then, as if in confirmation of his words, the shouts of the Arabs were heard again.

Wamba had seized the paddles, and he rapidly propelled the canoe toward the opposite bank of the stream.

But before the middle of the river was reached, El Hassen and Jason Broderick, followed by a large party of the swarthy slave-hunters, appeared on the bank which the fugitives had just left.

The escape of Frank and Zara had not been discovered by the Arabs until the young lovers had obtained an excellent start.

Probably the escape would not have been known as early as it was but for the arrival of a small party of Arabs from the north, who came to join the band of El Hassen.

These men asked to see the sheik, and one of the Arabs went to El Hassen's tent to call him. Then the 'discovery' ensued. The sheik's rage and Jason Broderick's consternation may be imagined.

The Arabs who had just arrived brought El Hassen important news. They gave the sheik the information that the Sultan of Fezzan was dead, and that there was a revolt of his subjects—two factions having engaged in a struggle to put their respective favorites on the throne.

"There's an end of my plan to sell the white boy for a fabulous sum to the Sultan of Fezzan, even if I recaptured him," said El Hassen.

This he meant to do at any cost. As may be supposed, the flight of Zara caused El Hassen the greatest alarm. He was determined not to lose her thus. The sheik would make any sacrifice to get her in his power again.

Pursuit was instituted then.

Only a small party of the Arabs were left to guard the captured blacks, and all the others accompanied El Hassen and Jason Broderick.

The cunning Arab trailers had tracked the fugitives skillfully. The report of Frank's carbine when he shot the gorilla had finally guided the Arabs directly to the quarry.

As Broderick and El Hassen arrived on the river bank and saw the fugitives in the canoe making for the opposite shore, they shouted to them to come back.

But their commands were unheeded. Wamba sent back a wild yell of defiance, and only paddled away more rapidly.

El Hassen's party could find no means of embarking to pursue the fugitives on the river.

Jason Broderick became desperate.

"The Stanhope million is lost if the boy escapes. He shall die now!" hissed the arch-villain.

The canoe containing Frank and his companions was still within range.

As he spoke, Jason Broderick raised his carbine and took aim at Frank. The succeeding instant he pressed the trigger. But as he did so El Hassen struck up his arm.

The aim of the villain was destroyed, and the bullet from his carbine sped harmlessly over Frank's head.

Broderick turned upon the Arab sheik furiously.

"Fool!" he cried, "you have saved the life of your rival. He has stolen away your future bride, and you shield him!"

"No, no. I feared your bullet would slay the girl. I should have ordered my men to send a shower of bullets at the canoe but for Zara's presence in it. She must not be harmed," rejoined El Hassen.

Wamba pulled steadily on, and the canoe had almost reached the opposite bank, when a shower of arrows were discharged at it, and Frank and his companions saw scores of naked Niam-Niam warriors dodging about among the trees that fringed the shore.

The fugitives were still in the country of these fierce cannibals.

Wamba quickly reversed the paddles and pulled back out of range of the native arrows. None of the occupants of the canoe were hurt except the Zulu. An arrow had slightly wounded one of his brawny arms.

But he made nothing of that.

Along the opposite banks the Arabs and the Niam-Niams pursued it.

For hours the flight of the escaping ones was continued on the river, and both bands of their pursuers continued to follow them.

Gradually the character of the river changed. It became narrower and more rapid. Its channel entered a rugged country, and rapids and dangerous rocks were frequently encountered.

And finally Wamba dropped the paddle with a groan, and held up the arm that had been wounded by the Niam's arrow.

Then Frank and Zara observed that the wound was terribly swollen and inflamed. Uncomplainingly the stoical Zulu had borne the torture of the swelling arm until he could endure it no longer, and that member was well nigh useless.

"This is terrible! I thought the wound was but a scratch," said Frank.

"Wamba know what it am now. De Niam's arrow was poisoned," said the Zulu.

"Heavens! It may cause your death!"

Wamba coolly nodded an assent.

Frank seized the paddles then, for the canoe was drifting toward some rapids. The lad plied the paddles while Wamba bathed his arm in the river.

"Is there no way of taking out the poison?" asked Zara.

"Um! If Wamba find red root, dat kill it. But no go ashore. Bad man close," replied the Zulu.

The Arabs and the savage natives were even then in sight on both banks.

A moment or so later a sharp bend in the river was rounded, and then the canoe shot forward swiftly down a steep water grade.

And a shrill cry of alarm burst from Zara's lips as all saw a mighty falls just ahead of them.

Frank tried to stop the canoe, and forgetful of his wound

Wamba assisted him. But all in vain. The canoe shot over the falls and a chorus of despairing cries went up from its occupants.

CHAPTER XII.

OVER A MIGHTY FALLS.

The rush and roar of the water rang in the ears of the occupants of the canoe. The air was full of mist and spray that for a moment blinded them, as they shot downward through space.

The canoe, with its three occupants clinging to it frantically, despair in their hearts and written on their faces, struck the boiling waves, and shot downward as though the undercurrent had clutched it and was drawing it down to a bottomless abyss, and Zara's voice rang out in one long, piercing, soul-thrilling cry, as the canoe took the terrible plunge.

Then the churning, foaming maelstrom under the torrent closed over the canoe and its precious human freight, and the roar of the waters seemed to swell into a triumphant, exultant chorus.

Was it a wild requiem for the lost? Was it a horrible dirge for the victims? To the Arabs and Jason Broderick it seemed so, and they thought the waters had forever cheated them of their prey.

Even Broderick was horrified, and El Hassen, too, was appalled. He uttered an Arabic exclamation of horror and disappointment, and then, with bated breath, he and his companions gazed upon the troubled waters, waiting to see if the canoe rose again.

The moment that passed was one of intense suspense, and then, at some distance below the falls and beyond the whirlpool, under its mighty torrent, an object was seen through the mist.

The keen-eyed Arabs made it out, while yet Jason Broderick was unable to decide as to its character, and a shout went up from the swarthy band that made the arch villain think that what he hoped for had failed to come to pass.

He wished that the occupants of the canoe might never rise again, and particularly that the water might never release Frank Stanhope from its unknown depths.

But all at once El Hassen shouted:

"It is the canoe! Two persons are clinging to it. By the beard of the prophet, they are Zara and the Zulu!"

"But the boy?" cried Broderick.

"I do not see him. No. He is not with the others!"

Broderick could not repress an exultant ejaculation.

Intent upon the rescue and recapture of Zara and the Zulu, the Arabs ran along the bank. It was seen that the canoe was drifting toward the side of the river occupied by the Arabs.

Wamba had survived the terrible plunge of the canoe, and so had Zara.

But the girl owed her life to the Zulu.

As the canoe struck the water, after its leap over the falls, Frank threw his arm about Zara, and said, as the roaring waves closed over them:

"Courage! I will not desert you!"

But the resistless power of the waters tore them apart in a moment, and then Frank was dashed against a rock, as he felt a powerful undercurrent dragging him downward.

Then all was a blank to the boy.

But as Frank and Zara were separated, careless of the pain the effort caused his arm, the Zulu, by a rare piece of good fortune, caught the girl, and with her struggled madly out of the whirlpool and gained the surface beyond. A moment later

he came in contact with the canoe, which had risen close beside him, and which floated bottom-side up, though one side was partially shattered.

Wamba clutched the canoe with one hand, while the other sustained the drooping form of Zara. The girl had lost consciousness, and was an inert weight on the Zulu's arm.

And the canoe drifted to the Arabs' side of the river. The swarthy slave-hunters plunged into the shallow water, and El Hassen seized Zara in his arms and tore her away from the brave fellow who had saved her.

The Zulu was now well-nigh powerless to resist the Arabs.

The poison of the Niam-Niam's arrow had entered his blood, and he was sick, faint and numb. The Arabs dragged him to the shore and then he staggered and fell.

Baba, the favorite henchman of the sheik, was somewhat skilled in medicine, as understood by the Arabs, and he examined Wamba's poisoned wound.

"The sheik will lose a valuable slave unless he is cared for at once," cried Baba. "He has been shot by a poisoned arrow."

"Save him if you can, Baba," instructed El Hassen, who was giving all his attention to the resuscitation of Zara.

Baba ran to his donkey and opened a sheepskin bag. He took out several skin flasks and returned to the Zulu. Wamba had momentarily lost consciousness. But the Arab made him drink of the contents of one of the skin-bottles, and he opened his eyes again.

The Arab soaked some leaves in the contents of another bottle, and looking at the same Wamba muttered:

"Da leaves of red weed. Arab wise man. Dat kill poison maybe if not too late. Den Wamba no die."

Baba bound up the Zulu's wounded arm with a mass of the moistened leaves, gave him another drink from the bottle, and then placed him under a tree, and set a guard to watch him.

Meantime Zara had been fully revived. She had not swallowed much water, and the task was not found very difficult.

Finally Jason Broderick and the Arabs concluded that Frank had perished, and then the treacherous villain who had betrayed the lad exulted indeed. And while Jason Broderick rejoiced with unholy satisfaction at the death of Frank Stanhope, Zara was overwhelmed with grief. The poor girl was well nigh heartbroken. She had given the boy all the wealth of a pure young heart's first true love, and she felt as if all the light and happiness of the world had been put out for her when his promising life was extinguished.

The slave-hunters remained encamped on the river until the next day. A bright lookout was kept for the Niam-Niams the while, lest they should cross the river in their canoes and attack the camp. But this they did not do. Probably they were deterred by observing the numbers of the Arabs.

Zara became apathetically despairing. Hopelessness caused her to look forward to the fate El Hassen held in store for her as something she could only escape by death.

The following day the Arabs marched away. And as they went Jason Broderick said, in evil triumph:

"Now I can return to America without delay and without fear. The boy has found his grave at the bottom of this African river, and the stakes of the desperate game I have been playing are won."

But he counted without his host. He had not the positive evidence of Frank Stanhope's death, and the truth was the boy yet lived.

After a space which was all a blank to Frank, subsequently to the moment when he was dashed against the rock and drawn forward by the undercurrent, he regained his senses.

Then he found that he had been washed into a cave in the side of the river, the entrance to which was under water. The boy was cast up high and dry on the floor of the cave, but

the darkness there was complete, and it seemed the only way of escape was through the deadly whirlpool beyond.

CHAPTER XIII.

ZARA MAKES A DESPERATE MOVE.

When the Arab slave-hunters marched away from the river, where they believed Frank Stanhope had met his death, they, of course, took Zara and Wamba, the Zulu, with them.

The treatment which the Zulu's wound had received had worked wonders in the way of a cure. Wamba found the pain very much relieved, and the swelling was subsiding rapidly. His other symptoms were favorable, and he felt that his recovery was assured.

Wamba believed, with the others, that Frank Stanhope had perished, and the Zulu's regret and grief were sincere, though he remained as stoical and seemingly unmoved as ever.

The giant was yoked with the other black slaves of the convoy, and he marched along with them docile and unresisting. Wamba hung his head and appeared utterly disconsolate and dejected.

Observing him, El Hassen said:

"The black giant's will is pretty well subdued at last. With his spirit broken I don't think he will give us much more trouble. He will be worth more than any four ordinary negroes in the slave marts. Such big fellows always bring the best price."

With an eye to his own interest, El Hassen gave orders that Wamba should be well treated on the march.

Could he have seen the fiery flash in the downcast eyes of the Zulu he would have suspected that his meekness and submission was all a ruse. Such was the fact. The cunning fellow was playing a part to induce the Arabs to remit their excessive vigilance regarding himself. He was plotting to escape, and his dauntless spirit was as untamed as ever.

For two days the Arabs marched eastward.

Then Jason Broderick said to El Hassen:

"Now, sheik, if you will lend me an escort of ten men and a guide, I'll make my way to Zanzibar, and there take passage on the first vessel that is bound for America."

"My men are at your service. Choose the ten for yourself, and I will select a guide who knows the route," replied the Arab.

Then he called to an old scarred veteran man-hunter and introduced him as a guide to be relied upon.

Jason Broderick picked out the ten men of his escort, and, after the necessary preparations for departure were made, he and his party set out for Zanzibar. El Hassen bade his old comrade good-by in a friendly way, and wished him good luck on his journey.

It was now El Hassen's plan to work his way slowly toward the coast himself, picking up slaves as he went, by attacking native villages on the route, and capturing their inhabitants.

El Hassen was not a pure Arab. Portuguese blood flowed in his veins, too. Being cunning, and showing no mercy to an enemy, he had acquired ascendancy over several rude tribes near a remote part of the coast, not far from the mouth of the Congo.

This portion of the African seaboard was never visited by vessels, save a few slavers, to whom he supplied cargoes of human freight, bound for the West Indies.

El Hassen had a stronghold near a harbor known only to the slave traders, and there he had constructed a walled town, fortified it, and became a self-appointed sultan.

The walls of the slave-hunters' town were provided with

loop-holes for musketry, and within these walls he and his followers dwelt when not absent on their semi-annual forages in pursuit of slaves.

The walled town was to be El Hassen's destination, and there he meant to keep the slaves he had secured until the arrival of one Captain Mendoza, of the slave ship Vulture.

Mendoza had dealt with the Arab when the latter and Jason Broderick were partners in slave-hunting, and the traffic in human flesh and blood years before.

El Hassen was aware that Captain Mendoza was now absent on a voyage to Cuba with a cargo of slaves, and the captain of the slave-ship had agreed to visit the port of New York before his return, in order to purchase some supplies which the Arab had commissioned him to procure for him.

The slave-hunter needed yet to secure a number of blacks in order to make up the number required by Captain Mendoza, and he was anxious to capture them as soon as possible.

El Hassen was now in haste to return to his town. He intended then to make Zara his wife, for now that she knew the secret of his purpose he thought that delay might be dangerous.

One evening after the slave-hunters had encamped, and while Zara sat in her tent brooding upon the dark future, El Hassen entered.

Zara started up at the sight of him, and retreated, instinctively dreading his near approach. Since she knew of her parents' fate the very sight of the Arab inspired her with horror.

El Hassen read the sentiments of the girl in her mobile, expressive countenance, and he was much displeased.

But concealing his anger, he said:

"Zara, I have come to tell you that you may resign yourself to my will. Nothing can come between me and my purpose."

Zara shuddered, and she replied:

"Spare me! I will be your slave if you will, but your wife—never!"

"El Hassen's will is law. When we arrive at my walled town again you shall become my bride. I tell you this now, that you may be prepared when the time comes."

Zara bowed her head in mute despair, and El Hassen, after a few more remarks to which Zara returned no answer, turned to the door.

There he paused, and said:

"You shall be my queen. Slaves shall do your bidding, and rare jewels and the finest silks—all things women love—shall be yours, only smile upon me."

But Zara did not lift her head.

El Hassen waited for her answer a moment, and as she remained silent, he stalked out of the tent in anger.

But he was more than ever resolved to carry out his cruel purpose and make Zara his unwilling bride.

Left alone Zara threw herself down on her couch. She shed no tears, but her heart was filled with misery. For hours Zara remained thus, and she was thinking deeply. At last she arose. The light of a new resolve flashed in her beautiful eyes. She had determined upon taking the only possible course to escape.

"Yes," she muttered, "it must be! Better perish in the jungle than go to the fate El Hassen has decreed for me. I will make the desperate attempt I have resolved upon."

She knew that Wamba had now entirely recovered his strength, and his wounded arm troubled him but little.

The Zulu was kept yoked and fettered with the other blacks, and they were guarded at night by the Arabs, who were under orders from El Hassen to shoot down any one of them who tried to escape.

An ugly old Arab, who walked with a bad limp—the result

of a spear wound, given him by a native—acted as cook for the men detailed to guard the captured blacks that night.

Zara went to the door of her tent, and looking forth, while she was vainly racking her mind to devise some plan for Wamba's liberation, she saw the old Arab cook making a savory stew over a campfire in the part of the camp where the black captives were quartered.

The sight presently suggested an idea to the girl.

Then she walked carelessly toward a number of packs and camp utensils, which were heaped under an adjacent tree.

Among them she had seen Baba's medicine-bag.

Unnoticed, she reached it, opened the bag, and secured what she sought.

With the package of opium concealed in her bosom, she went on to the campfire, where the old Arab was preparing supper for the guards of the blacks.

Among the latter she saw Wambo.

Their eyes met, and it seemed to Zara that her glance must have conveyed some intelligence of her purpose to the Zulu. His eyes brightened, and after that she felt he was watching her with deep interest.

"Now to get the opium into the decoction old Ezbeth is brewing. If he would only turn his back," she thought.

She came close to the great kettle, the contents of which the Arab cook was diligently stirring. He looked up, and grunted a salutation. But some moments passed, and he gave Zara no chance to drop the opium in the kettle. She tasted the stew at the old fellow's request, and praised it, much to his delight. All at once a sharp cry was uttered by Wamba, and he commenced to struggle with his neck-yoke. The Arab cook turned from the fire. Then Zara instantly dropped the opium into the kettle. But as she did so old Ezbeth turned and clutched her arm.

CHAPTER XIV.

DISCOVERED.

When Frank Stanhope returned to consciousness, and found himself in the riverside cave, he knew not how long a time had elapsed since the canoe took the terrible plunge over the falls.

The boy gained his feet and groped his way to the entrance below the water level. The floor of the cave here slanted downward, and Frank presently drew back with a shudder as the water was dashed up at his feet.

He heard the pandemonium of the waves beyond the entrance, and then he crept backward. Solid rock walled in the rear of the cave, as far as he could learn by the sense of feeling, for of course it was dark as Erebus in the underground space.

Some time elapsed. Then Frank resumed his explorations in the darkness. And this time he made a discovery. He came upon a narrow fissure in the rocks. A breath of air struck his face, and with a quick exclamation he crowded his form through the rift.

Then Frank found himself in a second cave. He crept forward, feeling his way along the wall, and dreading that he might step into a pitfall. But such a calamity did not befall him. Frank wandered on and on, and suddenly he caught a faint glimmer of light ahead. Oh, how his heart leaped at the sight! Very soon he came to a passage in the side of a hill out to the surface, and he stood once more in the glad sunlight. At first the light blinded him. But as soon as he became accustomed to it he ascended to the top of the hill and took an observation of his surroundings.

Afar he saw a cloud of mist hanging over a rugged dingle, and he believed that it marked the light of the falls.

The first impulse that seized him was to try to learn what the fate of Zara and Wamba had been.

There were wild grapes on the hillside, and, after picking and eating some of these and refreshing himself by drinking from a cool spring of excellent water which he found, Frank set out for the river, guided by the cloud of mist.

Soon he caught the roar of the falls, which he would have heard long before had not a strong wind been blowing the wrong way. At last Frank reached the river a short distance below the falls.

Now, however, the slavers had resumed their march. Frank found the traces of their camp, and they had left a well-defined trail behind them.

The boy set out to follow it, impelled by his desire to find out the fate of Zara and Wamba the Zulu. Then, too, he thought if he could trail the slavers undetected, they might sooner or later conduct him to the sea coast.

Frank presently made a discovery that thrilled him with most intense joy. On a thorn-bush he saw a shred of silk which he knew had been torn from Zara's costume, and pressing on, animated anew by the belief that the fair captive of the Arabs yet lived, he followed the trail all day.

On the evening when Zara sought to drug the food of the men who were to stand guard over the captured blacks Frank crept near the camp. He saw Zara and Wamba, and rejoiced accordingly.

But at that very moment an unseen danger menaced him. A huge African serpent coiled on the limb of a tree underneath which he was passing suddenly swung half its scaly length downward and encircled Frank. With startling swiftness, the serpent lapped fold after fold around the boy, while he struggled to throw it off. The combat between the boy and the serpent caused a crashing noise in the thicket, and hearing it, several Arabs seized their carbines, and sprang into the cover. The succeeding moment Frank was discovered.

CHAPTER XV.

LARRY O'LYNN AGAIN.

The exultant Arabs promptly attacked the serpent and soon dispatched it. Frank was released from the repulsive captivity in which the huge snake had held him only to become the victim of another form of enthrallment.

The men who discovered the boy pounced upon him, as soon as he was free from the serpent's hold, and dragged him into the slave-hunters' camp.

It was at that moment that old Ezbeth, the cook, seized Zara's arm, just after she had dropped the opium in the kettle. The commotion Wamba had made was a ruse on the part of the Zulu to detract the attention of the old Arab from Zara. Without divining her precise motive Wamba saw that the girl was watching a chance to do something unseen by the old cook.

"Surely you do not grudge me a taste of your stew," said Zara, looking up at the old Arab innocently.

The opium was in the form of powder, and it had disappeared in the contents of the kettle. Old Ezbeth was deceived. He released his hold upon Zara, and then both he and the girl saw Frank led into the camp.

El Hassen rushed from his tent and gazed upon the young American as if he regarded him as one returned from the grave, of whose material existence he was half in doubt. But in a moment exultation was the slaver's dominant sentiment.

"Oh, ho! By Ali! this is good fortune! A hundred more gold pieces for my treasure chest the capture of the boy means. But my friend Broderick will never know the truth regarding the boy."

Then he ordered Frank to be yoked and fettered like the other slaves, and this was done, but the boy was not allowed to speak to Zara or Wamba.

A little later old Baba, having finished his game of heiga, went to his medicine bag. The old fellow was a confirmed opium-eater, and he sought for the drug which Zara had purloined. Missing it he was much disappointed and angry. Circumstances were leading up to a discovery of Zara's plot. A few moments later the old Arab was at the fire where the cook was still busy with his stew, and the appetizing odor caused Baba to taste it. At once he faintly detected the presence of his favorite drug, and exclaimed:

"By the beard of the prophet, there is opium in the stew!"

Then upon the cook's mind flashed the recollection of Zara's presence at the fire, and the suspicion half awakened by seeing her complete a covert movement about the kettle returned.

"The girl has drugged the stew!" he exclaimed, and then explained to Baba why he thought so.

Baba ran at once to El Hassen and communicated what the cook had said. The sheik strode to Zara and accused her. The girl denied all knowledge of the drug and said in conclusion:

"I am sure Baba is mistaken. He only fancies he tasted opium in the stew."

"We shall see," replied El Hassen, and then he ordered one of the black captives brought forward. This was done, and the negro was compelled to eat of the stew.

The result was the death-blow to Zara's hopes.

The negro quickly fell into a sleep from which it was impossible to awaken him.

"You see we have the proof of your falsehood and treachery, girl. Beware how you plot against me. My patience has a limit, and I have not forgotten the use of the bow-string," said El Hassen, in menacing tones, and then he ordered Zara to retire to her tent and placed a double guard at the door when she had entered the shelter. And so Zara was baffled.

Finally the long journey drew to a close, and one evening, at the hour of a glorious African sunset, the slave-hunters arrived in sight of El Hassen's walled town, and beyond its rude but formidable battlements, Frank Stanhope caught a glimpse of the Atlantic Ocean.

* * * * *

Meanwhile certain events had transpired in New York, in which Frank would have been deeply interested had he known of them.

In about two weeks from the time he was struck down by Jason Broderick's cruel blow, Larry O'Lynn, the faithful Irishman, who was Frank's friend, recovered. As soon as consciousness returned to him, the poor fellow turned to Daniel Morton, Frank's guardian, who was at his bedside and said:

"The man who struck me was the blackguard agin whom I was afther warnin' yez, I mane Jason Broderick!"

Mr. Morton was thunderstruck. At first he thought that Larry was raving—but a second glance told him the poor fellow was no longer delirious. Mr. Morton thought for a moment in silence. Then he said excitedly:

"Jason Broderick, is the next heir to Mathew Stanhope's fortune after Luther and Frank."

"Arrah, now it's in terror I am for the lad, for suppose that they found the missionary dead?"

"Then only Frank's life would be between Broderick and the Stanhope millions."

"And the boy alone wid the murderin' blackguard in the land av the nagurs!"

"The suggestion is terrible! Oh, Larry, what is to be done?"

"Someone must go after the boy and try to save him from Jason Broderick, if needs be."

"But who will go?"

"Sure an' I will."

"You, Larry—you?"

"Yes, master dear. Sure, an' I owe the murderin' blackguard one, and I love Master Frank."

"You're a noble fellow, Larry."

"And I may go?"

"Yes, yes! And I thank you from my heart for so nobly volunteering."

There was further conversation, and it was all arranged that as soon as he was able to do so Larry should go in pursuit of Frank and Jason Broderick.

When Larry had begun to go about the house again he was one day in the room that had been occupied by Jason Broderick, when he was Mr. Morton's guest. Larry was putting things to rights, and while thus engaged he chanced to move the fire-board, and then he picked up the letter which Jason Broderick had accidentally dropped behind it.

Larry deciphered it. Then in a state of great excitement he ran with it to Mr. Morton, who read the letter thus:

"Zanzibar, Africa, Sept. 9th, 18—.

"Jason Broderick:

"Comrade.—I write to tell you that the slave trade is again prosperous. The English have not spoiled it yet in my territory. I need a good man, such as you were, and I wish you would join me again. You know how to reach my stronghold. Address me at Zanzibar, and let me know if you will come.

"Your old comrade, El Hassen, Sheik."

"So Jason Broderick was a slave hunter after all," said Mr. Morton, when the Arab's letter had been read.

No more proof of Broderick's villainous character was wanting, and a few days later Larry O'Lynn secured passage for Africa on the only ship then about to sail for that continent. This ship was called *The Vulture*, and it was commanded by one Captain Mendoza, a Spaniard. The vessel sailed, and on board it went Larry O'Lynn. It was a strange coincidence, but the brave Irishman had sailed on the very slave-ship to whose captain El Hassen meant to sell Frank Stanhope as a slave. Startling developments must soon ensue.

CHAPTER XVI.

LARRY O'LYNN ON BOARD THE SLAVE-SHIP.

Larry O'Lynn and Mr. Morton were not very particular in making inquiries about the ship *Vulture*. They only knew that the vessel cleared for Capetown, South Africa, that it was a seaworthy brig, and not a passenger vessel, but a trader.

Larry was the only passenger on board.

Captain Mendoza had only consented to receive him upon the advance payment of more money.

The Spanish slaver was not averse to turning an "honest" penny in any way, and since he had put into New York to make purchases for El Hassen he thought he might as well take a single passenger, who would be powerless to make him any trouble, even if he did discover that the vessel was a slaver.

The *Vulture* carried a crew of fifty desperadoes, though a dozen or fifteen hands would have been a full complement for her management had the brig really been an honest trader.

Larry O'Lynn, when he went on board the morning the

slaver sailed from New York, saw nothing to awaken his suspicions or deter him from sailing on the vessel.

All the crew save those needed for the management of the vessel were kept below.

The Irishman was cordially greeted by Captain Mendoza, who was a brawny, swarthy-faced rascal, with huge mustache and a fierce expression, such as one is apt to associate with a mental conception of a blood-thirsty pirate.

Larry did not like Captain Mendoza's appearance, but he was so anxious to be on his way to Africa to protect Frank that he would have sailed with almost any one.

The Irishman remained on deck after the captain had gone below. Finally, however, Larry felt a desire to leave the deck. The water was rough, and Larry could not be called a good sailor.

He had not been to his cabin yet, and one of the seamen directed him. Larry was too sick to pay much attention to what the man said, and hastening down the companionway he stumbled into Captain Mendoza's cabin instead of his own.

The captain of the slave-ship lay in his bunk, snoring lustily. He had thrown his coat on a chair, and a large pocket-book had fallen out of it. Several papers were scattered about the floor, among other articles belonging in the pocketbook.

Larry saw that he was in the wrong cabin, but he was too ill just then to care. He sank into a chair, with his feet among the papers that had fallen from the captain's pocketbook. And then, with his head bowed, it chanced his eyes fell upon a half opened letter, and he read thereon the name of Jason Broderick.

At once Larry forgot that he was seasick. Flashing a glance at the sleeping Spaniard, he snatched up the letter to which the sight of Broderick's name had attracted his attention.

The letter was written to Captain Mendoza by Jason Broderick.

Larry O'Lynn quickly mastered its contents, not failing the while to watch the sleeping Spaniard out of one corner of his eye.

The communication informed the Irishman that Captain Mendoza was a slave-dealer and a friend of Broderick and El Hassen. More, the note told the character of the ship the Vulture.

Larry O'Lynn was for the nonce astounded. The discovery came like a mental shock. For a moment he did not stir. Then he thought of the consequences if the Spaniard should awake and discover him, and dropping the letter he started up. Was it the sound of his movement or merely chance? The Spaniard turned toward Larry and opened his eyes. The light coming through the port window made him blink, and the fumes of liquor in his brain made his vision confused. Larry was gone from the room before Captain Mendoza was sure he saw him.

The cunning Irishman set in to think out a plan to gain the confidence of the Spanish slaver. The very next day Larry began to play his part. He dined with Captain Mendoza, and over their wine they became confidential, and Larry let drop a hint that he was a fugitive from justice. At that Mendoza clapped him on the shoulder, and said heartily:

"I've killed my man myself, and I sympathize with you. We shall be good friends."

"I think so sure. Faith an' if yez hadn't let me have a passage it's in a prison cell I'd have been before this, I'm thinkin'."

"What do you mean to do in Africa?" asked Mendoza.

"Change me name while I go to the diamond mines, hide myself from the outside world, an' try to make a fortune, sure."

"Bah! Senor Lynn, the mine is no good to the many, only

the lucky few. Very few succeed there. The mines for a man like you? Diablo! Never, I should say. Never, senor!"

"Thin what? Sure an' I don't know what else to do."

Mendoza searched the Irishman's face for a moment with his keen, brilliant eyes, and then he said:

"There are better trades than diamond digging. I could show you a way to make money easier, and if you wish to hide from the world join my jolly crew."

"To be a sailor?"

"You are a keen fellow, senor. You and I could increase the business I'm engaged in. I'm a-going to trust, for you can't betray me if you would."

"Betray you, never! Be me soul, captain, such a thought wrongs me."

"Si, senor, I think so. You shall know all. This is a slave-ship and I am a slave dealer now bound for the gold coast after slaves. If you say the word you shall become one of my band. We share the profits of each voyage after a certain sum is deducted for the owners, and you can soon become wealthy."

"Be the powers, captain, I think the business will just suit me. Thin I shall be afloat all the time and safe from discovery. I'll join ye."

"Bravo!" exclaimed Captain Mendoza, extending his hand across the table to the new recruit.

"Now come on deck," he added, "and I'll introduce you to my comrades."

He led the way to the deck, and Larry followed him, congratulating himself on the success of his scheme.

Now for the first time the Irishman saw all the crew of the slaver. The whole half hundred sea brigands were called up, and Larry thought a more ferocious, dangerous-looking band would have been hard to find on the face of the earth.

Larry was introduced as a new recruit, and the crew of the slaver welcomed him with a hearty cheer.

After that he was treated as a comrade by all.

Captain Mendoza further discussed his plans with Larry, for he had conceived a real liking for the genial Irishman.

Soon Larry knew that the slave-ship was bound for El Hassen's stronghold.

CHAPTER XVII.

FRANK STANHOPE IN AN AFRICAN PEN.

Frank Stanhope and the Arab slave-hunters who had made him and Wamba, the Zulu, captives, marched forward toward El Hassen's walled town with very different feelings, after the stronghold of the slaver came in sight.

The Arabs were rejoiced that their long and perilous journey was almost ended and that they would soon be at home again, bringing with them a company of blacks whose sale would further enrich them.

Frank looked forward to what was to come in dismay, and Zara, too, felt now that the crisis of her fate was fast approaching. Wamba alone seemed indifferent. But was not his stoicism assumed?

The approach of the returning slave-hunters was soon discovered by watchmen stationed on the stone battlements of the town, and the populace came forth to welcome the returning band.

In the walled town dwelt the wives and families of the slave-hunters, and a scene of rejoicing ensued. The captives were marched through the gates of the town, and then Frank and Zara led away by El Hassen, while he and Wamba were

marched onward into the heart of the settlement with the line of negroes.

Frank and Zara had no opportunity to exchange a word at parting, but their eyes met, despite the distance that intervened between them, and there was a telegraphic exchange of loving looks.

And as Zara disappeared through the portals of the largest house in the town, still conducted by the Arab sheik, she waved her hand in token of farewell.

The young lovers knew not if they should ever meet again, and that silent parting was all the more pathetic by reason of the doubt and uncertainty that enveloped their future.

Frank and Wamba were driven into a great slave pen without a roof, simply a rude stockade whose walls no captive had ever yet scaled.

There the neckyokes and other fetters with which they had been secured during the journey that was ended now were removed.

Then Wamba and the young American boy had an opportunity to grasp hands and converse. But the scene in that African slave pen was so heart-rending that even the Zulu was moved, and more depressed than Frank had ever seen him.

The poor blacks understood the fate that was before them. They had seen the sea, and they knew they were destined to be carried far away across its unknown width to return no more.

There was a saturnalia of grief—a lamentation and wailing, an outburst of human misery. The grief of the negroes was that of despair. They felt now that all hope was gone. They believed they were never to see home or kindred again; that the free life they had known was ended forever, to be succeeded by hopeless slavery, which would end only when they lay down to die, and the Great Master struck off the cruel chains of bondage which his presumptuous creatures had dared to place upon their fellow-men. Oh cruel slavery! how shall thy sins ever be atoned for?

The desperate negroes, in several instances, committed suicide in the prison pen by opening veins by means of flinty stones and allowing themselves to bleed to death.

The horror of it all made a terrible impression upon Frank Stanhope. He had never before formed an accurate conception of the depths of human misery there was in the world. He and Wamba kept together, and all their thoughts and conversation tended to one end. They constantly sought to devise some plan of escape from the dreadful prison pen. But they could conjure up no means whereby to accomplish the end they desired.

The Arabs guarded the slave pen closely day and night. Sentinels were regularly posted and exchanged, and the walls were too high to be scaled without a ladder.

The captives found their situation entirely hopeless.

Twice a day—morning and night—the coarsest food was distributed to the captives, and then only were the doors of the slave pen opened.

At such times a file of Arabs, with leveled carbines, were drawn up across the entrance, and Frank and Wamba knew that to make a rush to escape then would be to hasten to certain death.

They were not desperate enough to perish thus. But some of the ignorant, despairing blacks adopted this method of ending their misery. Frank saw several of them shot down by the Arabs.

Frank told Wamba about the land beyond the sea, and tried to hope that if he and the Zulu were sold into slavery in the West Indies, they might escape even from there.

The boy counted on making an impression on whosoever might become his purchaser because he was white. He did

not think that El Hassen, who was now his bitter enemy because of his jealousy, had thought of that and meant to defeat such an attempt. But this was true, as Frank was soon destined to learn.

With all his despair, the boy's most harrowing reflections were of Zara.

That she was forever lost to him, and doomed to meet a fate such as he shuddered to contemplate, was the most bitter thought he experienced. It made him frantic to think that he was powerless to interpose between her and the ruthless slave-hunter.

And the boy thought of the man whose treachery had condemned him to this, the most cruel fate that could fall to the lot of man, and in the horrible African prison pen, he registered a mental vow, that if the good God answered his prayers and led him out of bondage back to his own free native land again, Jason Broderick should surely meet the punishment he so richly deserved.

Several days went by, and one evening a file of Arabs marched into the slave pen, singled out Frank and conducted him out alone.

The boy wondered, in painful suspense, what was coming now.

But the escort was mute.

They could tell him nothing.

Upon leaving the slave pen the Arabs conducted Frank to a small stone building, where El Hassen and several other Arabs met him.

Then he was forced to drink of a strange, bitter decoction, and shortly after swallowing the mixture he experienced a sense of sleepiness against which he struggled unsuccessfully. He thought, as he strove to keep awake, that he had been poisoned, and his terror was beyond description. Finally he lost consciousness—a death-like slumber came upon him.

When he awoke he was back in the slave pen, and he opened his eyes to see Wamba standing over him with a look of consternation and surprise on his black face.

"What is it, Wamba?" cried Frank.

"De Arabs hab made you brack," replied the Zulu; and it was true.

While he was in a drugged sleep some application of coloring matter had been applied to his skin, and he was now almost as swarthy as a real African.

Frank cried out in despair as he realized all this.

"But de color wear off some time," said Wamba.

"But too late to do me any good, perhaps. Let me now proclaim that I am white and no one will believe me. My hair is black and crispy curly. Only my regular features are in my favor, and some Africans possess regular features," replied Frank despondently.

"But no brack boy talk like you. Arab can't change dat."

"True, Wamba. But the Spanish slave-holders of the West Indies are a cruel, mercenary class of men. They may refuse to liberate me under any circumstances. I have heard of white men being enslaved by them."

"You am gibbin' up. Don't do dat, Marse Frank."

"No, I will not," replied the lad determinedly.

"Dat's right. Wamba don't gib up. Zulu nebber does. Him brave. We make big fight, maybe, across the sea."

"Cunning and favorable circumstances alone can save us there, I fear."

Thus they talked on for some time to the same purpose, and meanwhile El Hassen rejoiced at Frank's transformation, and he muttered:

"Now there will be no question about Captain Mendoza's buying the boy as a black."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE REVOLT OF THE NATIVE TRIBES.

It will be remembered that mention has been made of the fact that, by reason of his superior ability and merciless dealings with all who opposed him, El Hassen had acquired ascendancy over the tribes that occupied the territory adjacent to his stronghold at the walled town where Frank was now a captive.

These tribes had long been compelled to pay El Hassen a yearly tribute of slaves, and as may be supposed, the native chiefs secretly hated El Hassen, while they feared him.

The natives had finally resolved upon uniting in revolt, although they had heretofore acted independently, each tribe by itself, in all contests with El Hassen, and so been defeated.

The natives had planned to attack the stronghold of the slave-hunters during the absence of El Hassen.

A day or two after Frank was transformed in appearance by the application of coloring matter to his skin, there was a grand council held by the tribes in a remote jungle.

The result was a unanimous decision that the attack upon the Arabs should be made without delay.

That night the tribes mustered their fighting men, and an army of black warriors, who presented a formidable appearance, armed with spears, battle-axes, and bows and arrows, were drawn upon a jungle-environed plane, less than one mile from El Hassen's stronghold.

They waited until the night was well advanced and the moon had disappeared. Then the command to advance was given, and the black army silently marched toward the slave-hunters' town.

That very night Zara, who had been kept a prisoner in El Hassen's house since her return to the slave-hunters' town, had been visited by the sheik, and he informed her that on the morrow she would become his bride according to the rites of the Arabs.

Zara sat at the window of her apartment. The hours of midnight had passed. The moon had sunk to rest and the night had darkened.

All at once the young girl was startled by a terrific outburst of savage yells that rang forth abruptly, accompanied by the rattling detonation of a volley of musketry.

She sprang up. She knew the sounds came from the gates of the town, and, recognizing the savage yells, she knew that the natives had attacked the gate, and that the Arab guards had discharged their carbines at them.

This was true. At once the town was alarmed. El Hassen rushed from his house and rallied his men. In a few moments he was leading them to the support of the guards at the gate.

But before he came up with reinforcements the gate fell, and the guards fell back before the wild charge of the black warriors that ensued.

El Hassen met the retreating guards. His new force checked their retreat, and then the Arabs instantly met the onrushing blacks with a terrific volley from their carbines and followed it with a charge.

The natives were hurled back.

The pistols of the Arabs came into play, and the slaughter that ensued was terrible. The rear ranks of the Arabs reloaded their carbines, and while those in front knelt in obedience to command, those in the rear fired over their heads.

Then the blacks broke and fled. They could not stand the deadly fire which they were unable to return.

The Arabs charged on.

One more stand was made by the blacks at the gate, then

they were driven through it and the victory was with the Arabs.

But El Hassen had fallen.

In the last charge he had led his men, and he had gone down under a native arrow.

At once the Arabs set up the death yell of the desert, and Zara, crouching in terror at the window in the sheik's house, heard it.

"Saved! Saved! El Hassen's death is my salvation."

The natives meanwhile had lost so many men that they were completely disheartened.

But their chiefs rallied them and led them at the gate, which the entire force of the Arabs now defended again. They were easily repulsed this time, and then they drew off, forced to acknowledge themselves finally beaten.

Great was the lamentation of the Arabs over the death of El Hassen, and the next day he was buried according to the rites of the Arabs.

Then his successor was chosen.

He was a distant relative of El Hassen, and, according to the law of succession which prevails among the Arabs, entitled to succeed the dead sheik.

Ben Mourad was the new sheik's name.

Some days later at dawn of day the Arabs were startled by the booming of a signal gun at sea.

Then a vessel was discovered approaching the harbor a short distance north of the town.

Frank and Wamba heard the cannon, and through an opening between the logs that formed the wall of the slave-pen, they obtained a view of the sea and saw the ship.

Upon a rude pennant floating at the masthead was the name of the vessel. Frank read it thus: "The Vulture."

The slave-ship had arrived.

An hour later Captain Mendoza had landed, and was engaged in a confidential interview with Ben Mourad and his Circassian wife. At the close of the interview the Spaniard counted out a large sum in gold for Ben Mourad, who then said:

"You have paid the price. Now Zara, the white girl, is yours."

CHAPTER XIX.

LARRY O'LYNN IN THE SLAVE-HUNTERS' TOWN.

The slave ship had not made a quick voyage. Several incidents had occurred to delay the vessel. First several severe storms were encountered off the coast of the Cape of Good Hope. The Vulture was more than once threatened with destruction; but the vessel proved herself a stanch craft, and she outrode the storms.

After crossing the tropic line, the Vulture encountered new perils.

One afternoon, as Larry O'Lynn, who was still in high favor with the Spanish captain of the slaver, and Mendoza himself were on deck, the lookout sighted a vessel and gave the usual cry of:

"Sail, ho!"

Suddenly taking his glass, Captain Mendoza exclaimed:

"Diablo! An English man-of-war!"

Instantly the crew, who heard this announcement, evinced considerable excitement.

Mendoza quickly issued his orders.

Every stitch of canvas was spread, and under full sail the Vulture forged ahead.

The man-of-war pursued the slave-ship, but the latter held its own until toward nightfall. Then the wind changed and the Vulture's speed decreased.

Mendoza paced the deck uneasily, and consulted a chart, such as navigators use to sail by. Just as the sun was setting the lookout shouted:

"Land, ho!"

"The African coast!" exclaimed Mendoza.

"You are making for land, captain," said Larry.

"Si, senor. I know of a hiding-place in the hidden mouth of a river. The Vulture can slip into it, but the man-of-war cannot follow," replied the Spaniard.

Darkness came on apace. The man-of-war became invisible in the gloom, and the slaver ran on.

Some hours later, the moon having appeared, the slave-ship, guided by a man at the wheel who knew the passage, picked its way safely through a narrow passage and entered a river.

Very soon it was out of sight from the sea, and in the morning lookouts concealed among the rocks at the mouth of the channel reported the man-of-war in sight. But the disappearance of the slaver was a mystery to the British vessel. She coasted on and off along shore, but made no discovery.

At length the war vessel sailed away, and was seen no more. The slaver then lost no time in getting his vessel out of the channel, and the voyage was resumed.

But another storm was encountered not many days later, and the Vulture sustained injuries which compelled her to put into the port of St. Paul de Loanda for repairs, and there she remained for a long period, waiting for the ship carpenters to obtain the required material for the repairs.

At last the Vulture was ready for sea again, and leaving the Port of St. Paul de Loanda, she sailed northward, and in due time thereafter sighted the stronghold of the slave-hunters, as we have seen.

When Captain Mendoza landed, Larry O'Lynn accompanied him, and while the Spaniard was engaged in the private interview with Ben Mourad and his Circassian, the Irishman, with some of the crew of the Vulture, wandered about the town.

Ben Mourad had now established himself in El Hassen's house, and it was there that Captain Mendoza held his private confab with the new sheik and his wife.

As soon as the captain of the slave-ship heard of the death of El Hassen his swarthy face brightened. He seemed to find some source of satisfaction in the intelligence.

And so, when he was alone with the new sheik and his wife, after the business pertaining to the purchase of the black slave had been discussed, Captain Mendoza broached the subject of Zara's purchase also.

We have seen how the matter ended.

The mercenary Ben Mourad and his wife sold Zara to the Spaniard.

In the room adjoining the one in which the interview between the Arabs and the Spaniard had taken place Zara was secreted, and she had heard all.

Zara staggered across the room, and sank down upon her knees before a window when the Spaniard was gone. She felt that fate was cruel indeed, and she dreaded Mendoza even more than she had feared El Hassen.

"Heaven send me deliverance! Oh, that Frank might escape and rescue me. But such a thing is impossible, for he is imprisoned in the terrible slave pen!" she murmured.

The lattice was open. As she spoke a head was raised above the sill, and the strange face of a white man looked in upon her.

"Don't be frightened, miss. Sure it's a friend I am. Larry O'Lynn is me name, and if the Frank I heard ye spake the name at just now is Frank Stanhope, faith an' ye may have heard av me."

Larry had chanced to wander to the sheik's house, and but a moment before had sat down to rest on a bench under the window.

Frank Stanhope had mentioned Larry to Zara in one of their conversations, which it was not necessary that we should have recorded. The girl knew the man before her was her boyish lover's devoted friend.

"Frank Stanhope is indeed the name of the youth of whom I spoke. He has told me of you. Poor Frank is doomed to slavery. But speak. Tell me how you came here?" said the girl quickly.

Larry explained and then Zara told him all she knew of Frank's adventures and that she had just been sold to the captain of the slave ship.

CHAPTER XX.

FRANK MAKES AN APPEAL TO CAPTAIN MENDOZA.

Then he went on to explain how he came to the slave-hunter's town, and understanding his position, Zara exclaimed, when he had concluded: /

"And so you are powerless to help us?"

"Well, miss, to say the truth, it's a small bit av power I have just now, but I'll be wid ye on board the slave ship, an' you can trust to an Irishman's wits to protect ye from the black-muzzled Spaniard in some way. And thin, when the vessel reaches the West Indies, sure, an' we'll make a try to give the slaver the slip. Faith, an' circumstances will have to govern all our plans. We can't make thim all out in advance, ye know."

Larry crept away as he spoke, and Zara watched him until he was out of sight, to make sure whether or not he was observed by the Arabs.

No one seemed to have noted his interview at the window, and Zara breathed a sigh of relief as he turned an adjacent corner and disappeared.

Meantime Captain Mendoza, after leaving the sheik's house, set about making preparations for the loading of his ship with the slaves.

Larry O'Lynn stationed himself at the rude pier at which the slaves were embarked in the boats, and eagerly scanned the faces of the African captives as they were hurried into the boats by the Arabs and the crew of the slave ship.

At length the last boat-load of human freight was ready to put off to the ship, and still Larry had not seen Frank.

But Frank was in the last boat, and Wamba, the Zulu giant, was with him.

As yet the young American had not seen Larry, and he had no thought that his humble Irish friend was near.

What then was the lad's astonishment when, just as the boat was being pulled away from the pier, he caught sight of the rugged, good-natured face of Larry as the latter stood on the landing.

"Larry! Larry!"

Then the Irishman saw and knew him, and then, quick as thought, he made the boy a warning signal, and turned his back upon him just as Captain Mendoza came up.

Frank and Wamba were put below decks with the other slaves. The lad had resolved to appeal to the captain of the slave vessel. He had determined to tell him he was a white lad and an American.

The youth would have spoken thus to Mendoza at the landing, but the sight of Larry banished the thought from his mind for the time.

But now, finding himself in the hold of the vessel with the black slaves, the horror of the situation led Frank to dash by the guards and regain the deck.

Just then Captain Mendoza, Zara and Larry O'Lynn came up the ladder from the captain's boat and reached the deck.

The guards whom Frank had passed at the foot of the hatchway were pursuing him, intent upon dragging him back to the terrible place from which he had escaped.

Frank paused before the trio who had just gained the deck of the slaver.

"Hear me, Captain Mendoza!" he cried. "I am a white boy, an American, and the victim of a cruel injustice! A treacherous enemy sold me into slavery, and colored my skin to make me pass for a black. I implore you to have mercy, and not consign me to the black hole in which the negroes are herded like cattle!"

"What's this? Diablo! You speak like a white man. Who are you? Tell me all about yourself!" said Mendoza.

Frank believed that Mendoza was Jason Broderick's friend, and he was quick to think it would not be best to mention his treacherous cousin, so he related his story in a few words, giving Broderick a fictitious name.

"The Arabs have deceived me. Well, I've paid them the price for you, and so it's no use to go back for my money. However, I'll make it up out of them the next voyage. Young man, you look enough like a slave to deceive a casual observer, but now my attention is particularly called to you, I do not doubt you are what you claim to be. I've known the Arabs to be up to such tricks as this," said Mendoza.

"And surely you will set me free? I've friends in America who will repay you fourfold the price you have given the Arabs for me."

"I'll tell you what I'll do, boy. I'll treat you well on the voyage, and after I've landed my cargo in Cuba I'll sail for New York, and if your friends come to my terms, well and good—they shall have you back all safe."

CHAPTER XXI.

BETRAYED BY AN ACCIDENT.

Captain Mendoza then ordered Frank to be supplied with suitable clothing, and told him to select a berth in the fore-castle.

Fortunately Zara had not shown that she knew Frank, and so Mendoza did not suspect the truth regarding the maiden and the lad.

The maiden recalled her experience with El Hassen under similar conditions, and she was convinced that if Mendoza discovered that she and Frank were lovers the Spaniard would be even more vindictive in his enmity to the boy than the sheik was. Zara felt that Frank must be warned without delay to conceal the secret of their love from Mendoza. Soon after the ship weighed anchor, she went on deck, and presently Mendoza and Larry O'Lynn joined her. The Spaniard, with great politeness, introduced the Irishman, and then, as he was called away by a sailor, the young girl and her secret friend were left free to converse. Zara told Larry her plans. The Irishman approved of them, and at the first opportunity sought Frank in the fore-castle.

The boy was alone there when Larry entered, and he had just donned some more appropriate clothing than that which he had worn when brought on board with the negroes. There was no one to witness the meeting, and Larry caught Frank in his arms and hugged him, while tears of joy came into his honest eyes, and the lad was equally deeply moved.

Larry told Frank all that was worth telling, and then the boy had to relate all his adventures. Then Larry gave him Zara's warning, and Frank promised to be constantly on his guard, and under no circumstances to betray the sweet secret of his love for Zara.

The Vulture sailed for some time before favorable winds, and the weather held fine. Everything seemed to promise a quick passage to the West Indies, and Mendoza and his crew were therefore in excellent spirits.

Frank fared very well. But he did not forget the poor Zulu who was among the negroes in the awful prison-hole under the decks.

The boy secretly conveyed Wamba food and fresh water, and did all in his power to alleviate the sufferings of the brave Zulu.

One day, during a high wind, Frank ascended the mast, and losing his hold on the cross-trees, he fell to the deck. A rope partially broke his fall, but he lay like one dead where he struck the deck.

Zara stood by the rail and Mendoza was at her side when the accident occurred. Zara saw Frank fall, and she believed he was dead. At that moment of awful grief and despair at the thought of her boyish lover's fate, Zara forgot all caution, and springing to his side, she fell upon her knees and raised the boy's head in her arms. Then, while she kissed him and her tears fell fast, she moaned:

"Dead! Dead! Oh, Frank, speak to me! My love, my life, let me hear your voice again!"

Mendoza heard and saw all. The Spaniard became livid with rage, and darting to Zara he tore her from the insensible boy.

"So, so! You have cleverly fooled me. You and the boy are old acquaintances and lovers!" he exclaimed.

At that moment Frank opened his eyes and groaned.

"Mercy, mercy! what have I done? He lives, and I have betrayed our secret!" thought Zara, and then, half fainting, she hung heavily on Mendoza's arm.

The Spaniard hurried her to the cabin, and thrust her through the door, saying in angry tones:

"Now I understand why you turned a deaf ear to my vows of devotion. The boy was between us, but the obstacle shall soon be removed."

"A sail—a sail!" shouted the lookout, as Mendoza came on deck. Larry O'Lynn was beside Frank, and he saw by the expression of the Spaniard's face that all the jealous hatred of his nature was aroused against the boy.

The Spaniard seized the glass and looked through it at the vessel which had just been discovered.

"An English man-of-war. And as I live the very fellow who gave us chase before. She is bearing down on us and we have got to run for it!" announced Mendoza after a moment.

Then he gave orders to get the vessel under all possible headway, and addressing two ferocious-looking Spaniards of the crew, he said:

"Take that black boy down into the hole. Thrust him in among the slaves where he belongs, and see that he does not come out again."

Frank was hurried away, and Mendoza hissed in his ear as he passed him:

"You shall be sold into slavery in Cuba with the rest of the blacks."

A few moments later Frank found himself again in the horrible dungeon below decks among the blacks. Wamba joined Frank and conversed despairingly until, all at once, the booming of a cannon startled them. Then Frank knew the man-of-war had fired on the slaver. The firing continued, and gradually drew nearer. Meantime it began to look as if the man-of-war would force the slaver to lay to. But night was at hand. Mendoza felt there was a chance left of getting off under cover of the darkness.

CHAPTER XXII.

FRANK SOLD AS A SLAVE.

The night passed, and when daybreak came there was no ship in sight. The Vulture had a narrow escape that time. But she was not troubled again, and the voyage to the West Indies was made in safety.

Slavery was yet an institution in full force in all the islands. The Spanish authority of Cuba yet encouraged the slave trade, and so the Vulture entered the harbor of Santiago.

The port was made at night, and Mendoza, who still remained unsuspecting of Larry, informed the Irishman that the following day the slaves would be landed.

At a late hour that night Larry eluded observation, and entered the slave prison below decks. He found Frank and quickly acquainted him with a plan which he had formed, looking to the rescue of Zara and his own ultimate rescue.

Larry was allowed to go about the vessel as he would, and so no suspicion was awakened in the minds of the guards.

The Irishman waited until an hour after midnight. Then he crept to the anchor chains and descended to a boat which had been lowered, and that yet floated there. Entering the boat, he cast off, and rowed noiselessly along the side of the vessel until he came to the window of Zara's cabin.

Zara was at the window. She expected Larry, for he had found opportunity to acquaint her with his project before he visited Frank. Assisted by Larry, Zara crept through the window, which proved to be amply large enough to admit the passage of her slender form. The boat, then noiselessly propelled, was directed to the shore. The night was dark, and the gloom favored Larry.

The lights of Santiago guided him, and he soon brought the boat to a landing. Having carefully made it fast Larry assisted Zara to disembark, and noting his way, so that he could find the boat again, he led the maiden along a roughly paved street and into the town. The streets were deserted, and Larry and Zara made their way to the open country without meeting anyone. Finally they came to a hut in a grove in the window of which a light glowed. Larry had a well-filled money belt on his person, and he meant to bribe the occupants of the isolated dwelling to secrete Zara, if he found them such persons as he was inclined to trust. Judge of his surprise when the occupant of the hut proved to be an Irishman by the name of Miles Nolan, who, when he heard the story, heartily agreed to help them. Zara was assigned an apartment in the rear of the one into which they had been admitted.

Soon after that Larry returned to his boat. The daring fellow succeeded in getting back on board the vessel undetected. The following morning the escape of Zara was discovered.

Mendoza at once suspected treachery. But he concealed this suspicion, and having especially instructed two of his men to watch their comrades, with a view to discovering if there was a traitor among them, Mendoza and a dozen of his men, including Larry, who seemed eager for the service, landed to look for Zara. But the quest was futile. Failing to find any trace of the girl, Mendoza, in great disappointment, returned to the vessel with his party. Then the work of unloading the blacks began. They were conducted to a large open shed in a public square which served as a slave market. The news of the arrival of a cargo of blacks from Africa was quickly circulated. The planters came in from the surrounding country, and for three days the sale continued.

During that time Mendoza caused his agents to ransack the town and surrounding country for Zara, but she was not found. Frank Stanhope was placed in the slave market with the other slaves, and on the third day, despite his claim, which he proclaimed to all, that he was a white boy and an American, he was purchased by a swarthy Spanish planter of most savage appearance. Wamba was also bought by the same man.

Frank's master led him out of the slave-pen and turned him and the Zulu over to two of his drivers—cruel half-breeds—to be conducted to his plantation. The journey was to be made in a cart, drawn by a span of mules. Senor De Gallona, Frank's purchaser, was to remain in the town for a time.

As soon as Larry learned all this, he inquired all about the route to De Galona's plantation.

Securely bound, Frank and Wamba were made to sit in the rear of the cart, while the slave-drivers took their places on the seat. Then the journey over the frightful roads, amid the luxuriant tropical scenery of the interior was commenced.

That evening a halt was made at a wayside village composed almost entirely of blacks. Frank and Wamba were secured in a cabin, and after receiving some coarse food, they were left to themselves.

Toward midnight Frank was awakened from a troubled sleep by Wamba. The boy started up, and then, by the light from the moon which entered through a narrow window under the roof, he saw the giant Zulu standing before him free of his manacles. The Zulu had been straining and tugging at the irons for hours, and at last his wonderful strength had enabled him to break the catch that secured the manacles.

This Wamba explained in a few words, and he added:

"Now, come. In swamp maybe we get irons off your wrists."

The door was secured on the outer side, but the giant Zulu placed his shoulder against it, and then his herculean power was brought into full play. After several ineffectual efforts he succeeded in forcing open the door. Then they stole out of the cabin. But at that moment several dogs set up a loud barking not far away. The dogs uttered terrible long-drawn, wailing howls. The cabin from which they had escaped was near the confines of the village, and they quickly passed the last house and struck out for the wooded swamp beyond.

But they had not run far when they saw two men coming toward them from the swamp. At almost the same time they heard shouts from the village, and saw several lights flashing about at the cabin from which they had fled. They knew that the bloodhounds had awakened the slave-drivers, for they recognized their voices. The fugitives halted for an instant. They thought there were foes before as well as behind them.

But one of the two men who were hastening from the swamp suddenly called out to them thus:

"This way, Frank! Sure, it's Larry and a friend that's comin'! Have no fear, lad!"

Uttering a glad reply, Frank advanced at full speed, and Wamba followed him. They met Larry and his comrade in a moment. The latter was Miles Nolan, the Irish blacksmith who had befriended Zara. All four made for the swamp, and as they fled, Larry said:

"Zara is waitin' for us in a canoe in the swamp. There is a river running through it, an' we mane to reach the say by wather. Miles here knows the way, an' he furnished the canoe, an' he is goin' wid us."

Frank raised his manacled hands and grasped the palms of the honest man, while he thanked him with much feeling for the assistance he had rendered Zara, and for what he was now doing. Shortly after entering the swamp, where the way became more difficult, and they were obliged to go more slowly they heard the baying of the Cuban bloodhounds drawing nearer. Then ensued a thrilling race. The fugitives ran for the river with all speed, and nearer and nearer came the pursuing bloodhounds in full cry. But presently the sluggish, muddy river that traversed the swamp came in sight under the moonlight, and a moment or so subsequently the foremost bloodhound dashed into view through a clump of bushes in the rear. But the fugitives gained the river and entered a large canoe moored to the shore, in which Zara awaited them.

The canoe was paddled away from the shore just as the rest of the pack of man-hunting dogs came in sight. Larry carried a pair of heavy-caliber revolvers, and standing up in the canoe he sent a volley of shots at the bloodhounds, dropping two in their tracks, and more or less severely wounding several others. The canoe was then shot forward by vigorous

paddling, and the surviving hounds followed along the bank, howling madly.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONCLUSION.

The course of the stream was tortuous, and a bend in its winding way presently hid the bloodhounds from the fugitives' sight. They doubted not that the men who followed the dogs were close behind, and they did not decrease the speed of the canoe. They rowed on at great speed, but still they heard the bloodhounds behind them. Two or three hours longer the journey on the river was continued. Then they came in sight of the sea. The broad expanse of the Atlantic, beyond which lay the land of safety, stretched afar under the moonlight, and all at once the keen-eyed Zulu sprang to his feet, and, pointing out upon the ocean, exclaimed:

"See! see! Dar ship! dar ship!"

Every eye was turned in the direction indicated by the Zulu, and presently the other occupants of the canoe sighted a sail.

Then how their hearts thrilled! Eagerly they watched the sail as it grew more and more distinct, until all could make out a large vessel. They paddled out of the river into the blue water of the ocean beyond, while they watched the vessel, which was slowly drawing nearer.

Frank kept straining his eyes in the effort to make out the flag, and suddenly a cry of joy—such as made every heart leap—escaped the boy's lips.

"The stars and stripes! See—see! It is the American flag that floats at the masthead of the ship!" he cried, and then, despite his manacled wrists, he strove to clasp Zara in his arms. And such a shout went up from the canoe that, hearing it, the officer in command of the approaching vessel discovered the little craft containing the fugitives.

We need not dwell upon what immediately ensued. Suffice to say that Frank and his companions were taken on board the American vessel, which was homeward bound. They told their remarkable and thrilling story, and their countrymen did all in their power to make them comfortable during the homeward voyage. In due time Frank and his companions arrived in New York, and they all proceeded from the landing in a carriage directly to the residence of Frank's guardian, Mr. Morton.

In the meantime Jason Broderick had returned to New York and told of the death of Frank and his uncle, Luther Stanhope. According to Broderick, Frank had died in Central Africa, from the bite of a poisonous serpent.

Mr. Morton was deeply grieved to learn of Frank's death, and he doubted Broderick's story. In truth, he believed that Frank had met with foul play at the hands of Broderick, but in the absence of any proof of this he dared not openly accuse the villain.

Now, it chanced that on the day of which we are writing, at the same hour that Frank and his companions were approaching Mr. Morton's house, Broderick called there to demand certain papers which were in the possession of Frank's guardian, and which Broderick now claimed as the heir of the Stanhope fortune. Mr. Morton and Broderick were alone in the library when a servant admitted Frank and his companions to the house. Frank inquired for his uncle, and the servant informed him he was in the library with Jason Broderick.

"Do not announce us. I want to hear what Broderick is saying," said Frank, and then he led the way to the library door noiselessly, and the others followed without making a

sound. Listening at the library door Frank heard Mr. Morton say:

"Jason Broderick, I doubt the truth of your story about Frank's death. Oh, that I could feel certain of the poor boy's real fate!"

"I tell you he is dead. He died in my arms after I had cared for him as tenderly as if he was my own child."

At that Frank threw open the door and advanced into the room, followed by Larry and the others.

"Here I am, Uncle Daniel, alive and well. But that scoundrel meant to murder me!" cried Frank.

Broderick uttered an awful cry and turned white as death, while his eyes seemed to start from his head as though he thought he was looking upon a ghost.

"See, uncle! A guilty conscience needs no accuser! Observe the guilt in his face!" added Frank, pointing at Broderick accusingly.

"Furies! All is lost! The river has given back its dead!" cried Broderick, and then seized with sudden terror of punishment he made a dash for the door.

But Larry O'Lynn sprang before him.

"Stop, ye black-muzzled thafe o' the wor-ruld!" cried Larry, and as he spoke he caught Broderick a stunning blow between the eyes that felled the villain at his feet. "Blow for blow, Jason Broderick, an' this time it is my turn!" added the Irishman. Then Larry held Broderick down while Miles Nolan called in a policeman, and the villain was placed under arrest and led away by the officer.

Frank's guardian embraced him, and a scene of great rejoicing ensued. Zara was introduced, and Mr. Morton welcomed her. The story of Frank's adventures was told again, and everybody talked, and Larry and Miles Nolan and Wamba, the Zulu, found themselves regarded as great heroes.

* * * * *

Some time subsequently Frank was placed in possession of the Stanhope million through his guardian, who was appointed as trustee for the boy.

Zara's relatives were found, and they proved to be excellent worthy people, and the young girl was restored to them.

Miles Nolan was set up in business as a blacksmith in New York, and he became a prosperous citizen.

Wamba wanted to return to Zululand, and so Frank sent him back to Africa by an American steamer.

Larry remained in Frank's service to the end of his days, and some years subsequently the young American and the beautiful Zara became man and wife. Jason Broderick died in a prison cell, and he was never brought to trial for his crimes.

Future years of mutual happiness and prosperity was the lot of Frank and his beautiful bride, and they never regretted that they had plighted their troth far away in Central Africa.

THE END.

Read "RATTLING RUBE: or, THE JOLLY YOUNG SCOUT AND SPY," by Gen. James A. Gordon (A Story of the American Revolution), which will be the next number (506) of "Pluck and Luck."

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THINGS OF INTEREST.

The photograph represented a palm grove, a lake and a caravan of laden camels and white-robed Arabs moving in stately wise across the pale desert. "That is a picture of a mirage or fata morgana," said the traveler. "I took it in the Sahara, not far from Timbuctoo. There was really nothing there but sand, wastes on wastes of sand; but my dazzled eyes saw that mirage, and my camera saw it too. This is the only mirage picture I have ever got. I have tried in Ceylon, in Egypt and in Morocco to photograph various mirages, but always in vain. There are scarcely six mirage photos in existence."

A prominent physician at Carlsbad reckons on two or three fingers the chief ailments of Americans who consult him. They are the results of overindulgence at the table and the worry habit contracted by going the pace. The pace, as every one knows, may be the too-enthusiastic pursuit of any branch of business or social life. A moderate chase gives no one cause for worriment. It is when one gallops all the time that there is mischief. To a staid and sober observer who cannot see more than one side of a condition at a glance it appears possibly that it would be easier and pleasanter to take the remedy of moderation in this country than to have to cross annually to foreign parts in search of a cure. But he would find difficulty in leading any outside of his own circle to agree with him. Getting into shape to require the cure is two-thirds of the fun, and the other third is found in taking the cure.

Many of the streets in the city of Seattle are so hilly that a street car cannot ascend them by means of the ordinary electric trolley, so the electric current is assisted by what is called a counter weight. When a car is ready to go up one of the hills a cable is attached to it which reaches to the top, then passes around a large pulley or wheel sunk beneath the street level. The other end of the cable is fastened to a huge iron casting which slides along in a sort of subway specially constructed for it beneath the pavement. The weight of the car is nearly balanced by this counter weight so that the electric current is only needed to give it sufficient motion to overcome the additional load represented by the passengers in the car. The electric motors not only start the car but start the cable mechanism so that when the car ascends the weight descends. The next car which goes down the hill is attached to the cable and is prevented from going too rapidly by the counter weight, which is of course pulled back to the top by the movement of the car.

Passengers on the White Star liner Cymric, from Liverpool, which docked at Charlestown recently, were witnesses to a strange sea spectacle while about 24 hours out from

shore. A group of people who happened to be looking over the rail called attention to a curious disturbance not far ahead of the vessel on the port side. Soon the attention of all on deck was called to the spot, and as the ship came near it was discovered to be a fight to the death between two sea monsters, an enormous whale and a "thresher." The whale could be seen to dive in the attempt to escape his tormentor, but the thresher was on him with agile leaps at every reappearance, and the water for yards around was stained with blood. The steamer swept past at such speed that the creatures were only in sight a few minutes, but they caused plenty of excitement during that time, and from indications at that point of the contest the passengers were agreed that the whale was getting the worst of it from his lively antagonist.

It is one of the tenets of chivalry to call all women angels, but to my mind, writes Lillian Bell in the Delineator, there is a trace of the other thing in those women who ensnare big-hearted men and hold them captive through a truly iniquitous display of weakness. The spurious invalid; the perfectly well and strong nervous wreck; the fat and healthy dyspeptic; the athletic well of tears; the woman, in short, who preys upon a man's sympathy, pity, tender-heartedness—what you will—to keep him in subjection, is a vampire beside which the vampire of Burne-Jones and Kipling was a babe in arms. Every grown man who has cut his wisdom teeth can defend himself against the peroxide blonde dressed in red, but the drooping violet dressed in mauve or gray, or the ingenue in white swiss, or the limpid-eyed siren in baby blue will ensnare the big-hearted man who knows nothing of women, until he will think it is a privilege to pay her bills and tag around at her heels. Then some day he finds that he is more a slave to her assumed weakness than was ever a human being who was sold at the block.

OUR COMIC COLUMN.

Mistress (severely)—Jane, the piano looks as if it had not been dusted for a month. Servant—That's no fault of mine, ma'am; I've only been here a week.

The stranded automobilist was working over his car. Up came a sarcastic follower of the plough. "How many horsepower is she?" he mirthfully inquired. "Sixty," replied the automobilist. "Then, by heck, why don't she go?" "Because, my friend, thirty are pulling each way."

A certain childless woman moved to the suburbs and devoted herself to the raising of poultry. A witty friend went out to spend the day, and was shown a fine lot of young chickens. "These," said the mistress of the place (a la Cornelia), "these are my jewels." "And I suppose some day you'll have them set," responded the visitor quickly.

Struggling Playright (gloomily)—There is no chance for talent in these days, no chance at all. Stranger—That's because you don't know how to use your talents. Go into partnership with me, and we'll both make fortunes. All you need to do is to write a ten-act play. I'll get it produced at the Fashion Theater at my own expense and we'll divide the profits." "Are you the manager of the Fashion Theater?" "No; I run the saloon next door."

"What must I do to be saved?" cried the plutocrat at the mourners' bench. "Take all your ill-gotten gains and restore them to the ones from whom you took them!" thundered the exhorter. Next day the plutocrat wrote checks for most of his fortune in favor of his business rivals, who immediately thought he had gone crazy, and so they played the market against his corporations, and as a result they had to fork over the amount of the checks and twice as much more to him when the market closed.

The Mystery of Hazelwood Manor.

By KIT CLYDE.

It was in the early part of 189— that one of the most audacious burglaries ever heard of was committed. The scene of the affair was one of those old manorial residences which stud England, and which undoubtedly add greater beauty to the district. Having been erected in Elizabethan times, Hazelwood Manor was considered, looking at it from a burglar's point of view, as impregnable, and if access must be had the only way was from the interior. Yet, notwithstanding its reputed and universally regarded impregnability, a burglary was attempted and carried out with the most complete success.

Every precaution had been taken by the occupant—or "squire," as he was locally termed—to obviate such an occurrence. The massive oak doors were supplied with bolts and bars of the most substantial character, and the windows were equally well protected by heavy shutters. At a certain hour the butler went round to make sure that every bolt was secure and well home in its socket, and his faithful accomplishment of this essential duty was in thorough keeping with his acknowledged reliability.

But how often it is the case, when the most stringent measures are taken, as was the case at Hazelwood Manor, that there is some loophole unconsciously left open for the entrance of the cracksmen! The burglars had managed to obtain admission in the most mysterious way, and, having effected their object, disappeared in the same undiscovered and undreamed-of manner. Try as we could, we were completely at sea in this matter; but the fact remained that property of no inconsiderable value had been carried off, and without the shadow of a clew.

The squire, being a man of determination and a magistrate, had promptly, upon the discovery of the outrage, telegraphed to headquarters for some one to elucidate and discover the mystery. He sent by the mail a rough report of the affair, and as I had been detailed by the chief for the business I scanned it with unusual eagerness. I went over it with the principal, and he with his shrewdness was fain to admit that it was a hard nut to crack, but he added that if I succeeded in pulling it off successfully my promotion was assured.

I was only young, and, in fact, had not been connected with the force very long, but I had already rendered valuable assistance in several intricate cases, as well as giving undoubted evidence of my adaptability for the important office of detective. Before I started on this, as I then thought, wild-goose chase, I weighed every possibility, and I might say probability, as to the method adopted by the gang.

I was rather given to theorizing, but my theories on this affair were more castles in the air, for no sooner were they advanced than something cropped up which dashed them ruthlessly to the ground. I was, I must confess, for the moment nonplused, and abandoned my customary method of jotting down certain ideas and probable clews, and without more ado set out for the scene of the burglary.

I was greatly in need of a holiday, and much relished this dash in the country after being cooped up in the slums and haunts of thieves, intent on capturing a supposed murderer. My ride was of the pleasantest description, and when I arrived at the station which was my destination I felt already that the enervating and exhilarating atmosphere was preparing me for the work in hand.

By previous arrangement I was to play the role of an acquaintance of the squire, who was invited to the Manor for a rest, as being engaged in London during the busy law season. I was anxious for a change. Besides, as I passed for a lawyer, I could easily help to elucidate the mysterious burglary and if possible, clear it up without arousing suspicion.

I was very comfortably quartered in the old house, my room being so situated as to command a view of the surrounding country. We did not enter into business until the evening, when over our wine we discussed the late burglary. I had

made physiognomy an especial study, and prided myself on the knowledge I possessed of that most essential and important science—that is, from a detective's standpoint.

Without the least ostentation, and without the slightest idea as to my object, I had ample means of studying each individual servant, and hearing their views upon the subject. I had thought that very probably the culprit might be found among them, but was miserably disappointed.

The whole ground was gone over, the drawers and rooms from which valuables had been extracted were visited, but all to no purpose. Search as we might, our labors were all in vain, as no clew was forthcoming. But even "the best laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft agley"; and so it was in this case, for a clew came from one of the most unprecedented and utterly undreamed-of sources.

We had hunted in vain, and had given up all idea of finding the slightest trace of the burglars by means of which to identify them, and were considering the possibility of relegating this to the category of undiscovered crimes, when, without any definite purpose, I picked up an apple, the topmost one of a pile lying in pyramidal form on the sideboard.

I almost thought I should have screamed with delight. My exuberant and ecstatic spirits nearly made me wild with excitement for there, in the apple, was a piece of tooth as well as teethmarks. Evidently somebody had been endeavoring to take the biggest bite out of the apple, and in the attempt had undoubtedly suffered great pain. Now was my chance to earn the glory for which I pined. None of the servants had lost a front tooth, so that I felt inclined to extend my researches, and got mine host to circulate a report that I was off to town by the first train on urgent business.

In fact, such was my intention; but, as will be seen, my plans were materially changed. Having taken a seat in the carriage, I was making myself very comfortable, expecting to be the solitary occupant of that compartment, when three countrymen, with their baskets of produce, entered and took their seats. I cannot say that I was attracted toward them, nor did I bestow upon them more than a passing thought, considering that they were on their way to market to sell their goods. They were very talkative, and in seemingly good spirits, and as they conversed about general topics, I was not above assisting in the conversation. How it was I cannot say, but something I said must have nettled one of them, for he turned upon me very sharply, and retorted rather strongly, when what was my astonishment to see that he had lost one of his front teeth. I scarcely know how I restrained my impatience to seize him on the instant and charge him with the robbery; but common sense and prudence prevailed, as there were three to one.

Arriving at their destination, they alighted, and you may be sure I followed suit. I watched them for a considerable time, and soon made known my object to a policeman. We followed until another was in sight, when we pounced upon them.

They were soon safely ensconced within the walls of the nearest police station, where their baskets were searched, with the satisfactory result that every article of the stolen property was recovered.

However, we never learned how they contrived to effect an entrance into the manor, but it transpired that the burglar who afforded me the clew was particularly fond of apples, and could not resist the temptation of biting such a splendid one as lay so temptingly on the sideboard. But, as it proved only too well, his propensities cost him seven years' liberty, and afforded me the means of rapid promotion.

"Dick" Allen's Iron Nerve.

Occupying a seat in the reading-room of a downtown hotel one day, says the Alta California, there might have been observed a seemingly aged gentleman, whose hair was gray and whose cheeks were shriveled. A pallor of death was on his face, and frequently the muscles of his features would twist

unavoidably. His name was Richard J. Allen, and he registered himself as hailing from Toronto, Ont.

Five years ago Richard Allen, or Dick Allen, as he was familiarly known by his associates, owned, or at least claimed and occupied, a stock range of considerable area in Southern Arizona, the Mexican boundary line being distant but a few miles. He owned a large number of beef cattle and was considered well-to-do.

As an illustration of his iron nerve it may be related that at one time in 1884 he was given warning to keep away from a certain small settlement some ten miles from his ranch, he having incurred the displeasure of a gang of notorious cut-throats there. Allen smiled grimly as he read the warning, then strapped on his revolver and set forth for the hostile hamlet. He tied his horse in the rear of a saloon and started to enter, when a pistol shot was heard and a bullet whistled past his head. Allen turned. Not more than twenty feet away stood "Dan," a half-breed Indian, with a revolver in his hand. As Allen turned three more balls passed in close proximity to his head. He knew the Indian had one shot left. With a scornful smile he said: "Fire again, and fire lower."

The Indian did so and the next instant his spirit had left the arid plains of Arizona forever. Then Allen strode into the saloon, where at least half a dozen of his enemies were gathered, and demanded to know who sent him the warning. No one answered, and after roundly cursing the gang for their cowardice he left and went home. For two months he battled hard with death, for the last bullet fired by the Indian had lodged in his right breast, almost piercing the lung.

It was some three months after this occurrence that Allen met with a mishap that hurled him from the heights of a sturdy manhood to an existence little removed from death. It was in the summer of 1885. All day long Allen had been hard at work branding a lot of yearling steers at a point some twenty miles from his dugout, and at night he was completely worn out. It was a wearisome gallop from the branding-place to his cheerless habitation, for the air was sultry and the baked ground gave forth an intense heat. It was nearly eleven o'clock when the stockman reached his destination, and glad was he when his pony was safely stabled for the night and he was at liberty to retire. He was about to creep into bed when his quick ear detected a slight noise in the direction of his stable, and he knew at once that prowlers were about. Seizing his revolver, he started for the stable on his hands and knees, for he intended to kill and not to alarm, having no garments on other than his undershirt. The noise at the stable continued and Allen moved rapidly toward the sound. So intent was he on investigating the noise that he failed to notice where his path led him, and suddenly without warning he felt something beneath him give way and he was precipitated to the bottom of a "played-out" well, a distance of some twenty-five feet. The well had been dry for years and the mouth had been closed with a few rotten boards, which, giving way underneath Allen's great weight, had caused the catastrophe.

For a moment Allen was stunned. The skin of his body had been abraded in a dozen places, and every bone ached with the force of the fall. The stockman was almost overwhelmed with rage, for in this accident he saw himself rendered helpless and knew the thieves, if any they were, would not leave as much behind as a lariat and might, should they discover his position, kill him. With a muttered cry of despair he turned to look for his revolver, determined to fight to the last should an attack be made upon him. As he turned he saw gleaming and flashing in the murky darkness a pair of small, beady eyes, and poor Allen's heart almost stood still, for a warning hiss and rattle told him he had in the well as a companion a rattlesnake. The reptile rattled angrily and moved his head from side to side in an uncertain way, and then behind Allen there came an answering sound, and he knew he had two reptiles to cope with instead of one.

The snake behind him soon crossed the well and joined its mate, the two meanwhile keeping up an incessant rattle. Their clamber had been rudely disturbed, and they seemed determined to resent it if possible.

Allen stood as if petrified. He knew a movement on his part meant an attack, and this attack to him must result in death. And such a death! He imagined himself bitten by the snakes and his fancy depicted a frenzied being with veins filled with burning poison wildly grappling with the scaly, venomous reptiles, and striving with the desperation of the awful fever to mount the hard sides of the well and die on the plain above, beneath God's smiling stars. The sweat poured from the poor man's body in streams. The snakes gave forth that musky odor peculiar to them, and this, taken with the closeness and warmth of the air, produced a sensation as of suffocation.

In a moment, still hissing angrily, one of the snakes began to move, and Allen saw its glistening eyes at his feet. The clammy thing crawled over his bare feet and circled around his naked legs. The creature seemed to like the warmth of Allen's body and stopped a moment. Then it slowly began to ascend his limbs to his body, and soon the terrible eyes were looking into those of Allen, and they seemed to burn through his brain. Up over his face the creature moved its head and then encountered Allen's crisp and curly hair. With an angry rattle the snake drew back his head, and Allen, knowing it would strike, raised his hand as quick as lightning and gripped the creature by the throat. With the other hand he grasped the rattles, and then he slowly, surely strangled the creature to death, though the fearful effluvia which it emitted almost caused him to faint. For half an hour he held the snake firmly; he saw the malignant light in his eyes grow dim and finally disappear, and then he knew one enemy at least was dead. But he dared not drop the dead snake, for the other had become uneasy at the disappearance of its mate and seemed on the point of starting out in search. The fierce, glaring eyes moved from side to side, the rattle was seldom still, and Allen never for a moment took his eyes from those hostile orbs.

For hours he stood thus, consumed with a feverish thirst, his nerves at a terrible tension and his eyes strained and almost bursting. Then the sky above him began to light up and a little ray of sunshine danced on the western wall of his underground prison. In a few moments the well was quite light, and then Allen and his remaining enemy saw each other at the same instant. The snake coiled and sprang, but Allen was too active. He stepped to one side and let the snake go by him, and then with a small club crushed out the venomous life forever. Then it was that Allen's great nerve gave way. He yelled and shrieked and cursed and tore in mad delirium; and when neighbors, attracted by his cries, rescued him an hour later, he was frothing at the mouth, bleeding at the nose, and the snakes were torn to shreds.

For weeks he lay in the cabin on the outer edge of death, but his sturdy constitution stood by him and he recovered, though he was but a wreck of his former self. His neighbors "rounded up" what little stock he had left—for the thieving residents of the frontier were quick to take advantage of his helplessness—and Allen left for New England to recover, if possible, his former health. But the shock was too severe and Allen will never be a man again. At the age of thirty-six he is as infirm as a man of seventy, and his life is devoid of pleasure. He cannot remain long in one place, for his nerves demand a constant change of scene, and he is a homeless, helpless wanderer. Soon death will come to his relief, and then perhaps Allen will learn why this dreadful plague was visited upon him.

Some unexpectedly interesting historical finds connected with the Roman and Teutonic periods recently rewarded the researches of the scientific excavators at Haltern, Westphalia. Besides ruins of the walls of a great fortified camp with an entrance tower, cave dwellings were discovered, some of them containing curious Germanic earthenware, household utensils, bronze jugs, clay vessels, silver and bronze coins and glassware. The variety of the implements and their different formation are regarded as evidence that the spot was occupied as a camp not only by Romans and Teutons, but by other races. The excavations are being continued.

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